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OPORTO & THE SERRA CONVENT.

LOOKING UP THE RIVER.

LUSITANIAN SKETCHES

OF

THE PEN AND PENCIL.

BY WILLIAM H. G. KINGSTON, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "*THE CIRCASSIAN CHIEF*," "*THE PRIME MINISTER*," ETC.

Grape-gatherers in the Douro.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LUSITANIAN SKETCHES.

SKETCH XVIII.

Salvador do Mundo.

Road from Oporto to Sardão. Our Arrieiro. Economy of Travelling. Macadamized Road in the direction of Lisbon. Clumsy Vehicles. Cattle-Fair in the neighbourhood of Vendas Novas. Arrive in succession at the Towns of St. Antonio d'Oliveira, Pinhiero de Bemposta, and Albergaria Velha. Needless Apprehensions of the Guide. Increased Exportation of Cork. Unpleasant Adventure of a Friend in the Algarves. Pass the night at Sardão. Numerous Annoyances.

A FEW weeks only had passed since my return from Braga, the time employed chiefly in expanding the notes I had made during my excursion thither, into their present shape, when the spirit of adventure again seized me.

One of the friends who had been with me to Braga, and who was paying a short visit to Portugal, was ready again to accompany me, so without delay we prepared for our journey. We chose two horses, apparently in good condition, whose easy paces recommended them to us; though in the sequel we discovered how little we ought to have depended on our own judgment. Our baggage, which we made as light as possible, that it might prove no hinderance to us, as we trusted, was carried on the back of a large, strong mule, under charge of a tall, thin cadaverous-looking personage, yclept Josè. Here again we committed a mistake. Had our luggage been more bulky and heavy, Josè would have driven the mule before him at a quick pace; but instead, deeming it a grievous sin that a Christian should walk, while a brute jogged on gaily with a trifling weight, he invariably mounted to the top of the pack, sitting with his feet over the animal's neck, and his body, as he leant forward, almost doubled up, while in his hand he held the reins, attached to a bit of most potent strength*. This man from his office was what is called in Portuguese an *arrieiro*; his duty being, not only to take care of our luggage, but to attend on our horses, as at most of the inns there is no person at all competent to this business. We found it indeed much to our own interest to see our beasts fed, and to visit them during the evening, in order to insure to them the best treatment circumstances would allow.

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* See pencil sketch of "Travellers in Portugal," Vol. I. Sketch I.

Our arrieiro was a character, a very dirty one, it must be confessed; but he possessed certain valuable qualities of his class. His first great duty in life he considered was to attend to the interests of his master, Senhor Lopez, of whom we hired our horses, by endeavouring to let them do as little work as possible, and his second to take care that nobody cheated us, and that none of our luggage was lost. His tall, gaunt figure was clad in a dirty green linen jacket and trowsers, while a low-crowned battered hat surmounted his head; the rest of his wardrobe being contained in the ends of a long bag which was thrown over the mule's neck: his bed doubled up served as the mule's pack, his bed-clothes being a horse-cloth, which on a cold evening he would wear as a mantle while sitting over a kitchen-fire. Such was our servant for several weeks—certainly not a pleasing specimen of his class, many of whom are active, clean-looking young men, who will look well to their horses, and also assist in cooking a dish for their employers. Josè did indeed at times, when he had learned our tastes, prevent our provisions being dressed with oil and garlic, the universal system of the country. The pay of an arrieiro when on a journey is twelve vintems, about a shilling per diem, food and lodging being found: the latter, indeed, he shares with the horses in the stable, where we always found our's sleeping close to their heels, though in the matter of food he fares far better, according to his taste, than his masters.

The hire of a horse is eight testoons, about four shillings per diem, feeding and shoeing (the latter

no small item) being also paid by the employer. Sometimes a quarter of a moidore (*5s. 6d.*) is charged, to include every expense; and that, I suspect is, on the long run, the best arrangement the traveller can make; for scarcely a day passed without our employing a farrier; and the stable-charges amounted to nearly as much as we paid for ourselves. During every ten or twelve days of travelling each horse wore out a set of shoes, not to mention those he cast on the road, besides requiring fresh nails every second day to one or other of his feet; so that frequently, when we were ready to mount in the morning, we found that the farrier, having waited for broad day-light to commence operations, had just got our steeds in his power, and that he therefore was the very last person we would wish to offend.

When one considers the rough, hard roads over which the horses have to move, one cannot be surprised that they should thus rapidly wear out their *ferramentos*—their irons, as the Portuguese call their shoes. It seems much more wonderful to a stranger that they manage to keep their feet; yet so well do they learn to pick their way amid crags and down rocky mountains, that broken-kneed hacks are not so common as in England—the land of turnpike-roads and grassy commons.

Besides our wearing apparel, our sumpter-mule carried two pair of large saddle-bags, filled with a store of tea, coffee, sugar and spirits, a cold ham and chickens, a tea-pot and coffee-pot, knives and forks; our portmanteaus containing also a couple of sheets

sewn into bags, to fasten round our necks, so as to defy the attacks of the most persevering (*com licencia*, by your leave, gentle reader) fleas or bugs in the land. The sheets, however, we seldom required; for except in one or two instances we found, even in the most wretched inns, clean, dry, and fine linen; but the towels and soap which we took were in greater requisition. We wore large-brimmed straw hats, light loose shooting-coats, sharp spurs, and heavy riding-whips or sticks.

Thus accoutred, soon after day-break on the 10th of September we took our way down the steep streets of Oporto, across the suspension-bridge thrown over the Douro, and up the narrow high street of Villa Nova, on the south bank of the river. On reaching the summit of the ascent, whence a good view is obtained of Oporto on its many hills—the bright stream of the romantic Douro, the ruined Serra Convent, and the long ranges of the wine-stores and houses of Villa Nova—a fine broad road presented itself. Here numerous gangs of workmen were employed, with English wheelbarrows (newly introduced into the country), carts, pickaxes and spades, in constructing a macadamized line of communication with Lisbon. The substitution of wheelbarrows for baskets in removing the earth, &c. is an advance in the right direction. Even *now* the heavy carts with revolving axles are used, though one or two private gentlemen have built, as models for their countrymen, light English carts, which a single bullock can draw with ease. Perhaps, however, by the time this work is through the press, they may have learned also the

advantage of small, light carts over heavy ones, in quickly performing their work. But the Portuguese, having been for so many centuries taught to consider themselves superior to all other nations of the world, naturally form the opinion that what they possess is the best; and, in addition to this, they are not fond of innovations. They do not like to abandon their accustomed modes, before being convinced of the utility of what is new; though being sensible people, they will, I doubt not, ultimately adopt the best machines to advance the improvement of their country, which is so evidently needed.

It was pleasant to trot freely over several miles of level ground, where, a few weeks previously, a cart could scarcely pass without risk of upsetting, though as yet the broken granite had not been laid on. We then again came to the old style of road, but at Grijò, a village only a few miles further, we fell in with other gangs of workmen, who appeared to be labouring with a good will, civilly doffing their hats as we passed. A thick mist, which a light breeze at intervals blew aside, gave promise of a fine day. Bits of a lovely rich landscape being exposed on either hand, were much increased in beauty by the varied lights and shades thrown across it.

We passed large parties of country-women carrying on their heads in baskets the produce of their farms to the Oporto market; many a lovely and fair countenance, with large dark blue or hazel eyes, beaming forth beneath their picturesque, broad-brimmed hats and white handkerchiefs. They returned our

salutations and compliments with smiles, or brisk repartee, as they walked rapidly on their way, taking all we said in good part. In the hamlets to the south-east of Oporto the young girls may generally boast of much beauty, but in the fishing-villages close to the sea they appear of a different race—thin, swarthy, and haggard in feature, their costume being of dark brown cloth, relieved by no white linen, their petticoats reaching to the knee, their legs bare, a short cloak thrown over the shoulder, and a low-crowned hat, with very broad, drooping brim.

In the windows of numerous cottages were coffee-cups and bits of bread spread out, with a pot simmering on the hearth or charcoal-stove, to furnish a breakfast to the passengers. Women, almost exclusively, supply the markets, few carts or animals being used to convey provisions. The men, with their jackets thrown over their shoulders, exposing their white shirt-sleeves and gay waistcoats, with long thin sticks in their hands, disdain to carry loads.

We had not seen our baggage-mule and arrieiro since leaving Oporto; and it now struck us that he might perchance have misunderstood our directions as to the way he was to pursue. We rode on to a little inn at Vendas Novas, where we determined to await his coming, while we satisfied our own hunger and that of our steeds. The only public room in the little venda (for it did not pretend to the rank of an estalagem) opened to the road in front and to the stable on one side. Like that of the cobbler who lived in a stall, "it served us for parlour, and kitchen,

and hall." We lunched off boiled eggs (the food most simple, and quickly dressed) bread, and wine; our table being placed opposite to the open door, where also sat a farmer and his boy, who had come on foot. The farmer, who was dressed in a long, dark blue great coat, and had not forgotten his long stick, shared his food very fairly with his juvenile servant. I tried to draw from him some information about the part of the country in which he resided, but he appeared to be perfectly ignorant of all matters except his own immediate concerns. The most unenlightened set of people in Portugal are the small farmers, who seldom move from home, and whose lands having for many generations descended from father to son, they are contented with their lot, and unwilling to make any change.

Our hostess, who strove her utmost to supply our wants, had a most pleasing expression of countenance. She told us that she and her husband were farming people, but having become security for the former occupants of the venda, they had been compelled to take it to repay themselves, though they did not like the life.

While we were there a neighbour came in to borrow their oxen, an excessively pretty woman, her face being partly shaded with a handkerchief which hung down beneath a small low-crowned hat. Her eyes were very large, of the deepest blue, and soft as a seraph's, her mouth perfect, over which an unconscious smile constantly played, her complexion clear, with a slight colour, and every movement was

full of grace as she stood at the door rapidly spinning the flaxen thread from her quick-turning distaff, and biting off the knots with her pearly teeth between the intervals of her conversation. I longed to possess the art of a Wilkie to immortalize that lovely countenance, though the canvass could give but a faint idea of her animated and speaking features. What heightened her charms was, her perfect unconsciousness of her own beauty, or of the presence of admiring strangers. She was evidently the wife of a respectable farmer, residing beyond the contaminating influence of a large city.

We were on the point of dispatching a messenger to Oporto, to learn what had become of our baggage-mule and arrieiro, and to direct them to be sent after us, when they appeared, jogging leisurely on, the latter on the back of the four-legged beast; and the two-legged one informed us coolly that he had stopped to breakfast, supposing we should proceed some way further. As we were but too glad to see him, we found no fault. Leaving our beasts to chew their Indian corn, we walked out to visit a cattle-fair which we heard was taking place on a common in the neighbourhood of the hamlet. It was a pretty spot, near a small chapel, which stood on the summit of a gentle rise, with a few scattered trees surrounding it.

At that early hour people had only just begun to assemble, though the wine-sellers were already on the spot with pipes of the generous liquid, supported on carts, from which the cattle had been removed, and with small tables in front, on which were spread

glasses and loaves of bread or biscuits, the whole surmounted with thick boughs, to serve the purpose of umbrellas in sheltering the fair vendors from the sun. Some, indeed, had immensely large coloured umbrellas over their stalls, which added to the picturesqueness of the scene. Now a sedate farmer would arrive with a yoke of oxen, then a gay youth would gallop up on a frisky mule, leading another by a halter, while an old man with three or four sorry donkeys came to the ground, followed by a horse-dealer; the largest animal in his possession being under the size of a New Forest pony, though with much more slender limbs. Then commenced a chorus of braying, neighing, and lowing; while several of the mules and donkeys, taking advantage of their masters' negligence, broke loose, and scampered over the field among the stalls, frisking their long tails, and giving vent to their delight in loud brays.

These sort of exhibitions seemed to constitute the great amusement of the day, for the beasts were sure to stop to graze outside the scene of action, or to return, after making a wide circle, to their former companions in captivity. Then the paces of all the mules, the asses, and donkeys, were to be tried; several contriving to throw their riders after galloping them through the crowd, the severe bits used appearing to have no effect on their hard mouths.

Some people were busily employed in cooking fish and messes of rice, others were sitting about on the shafts of the carts, or on the shady side of the ruined chapel, wondering when the fair would begin, and

conjecturing who and what sort of characters we might be; the general opinion being, that we were directors of the new roads.

We were obliged, before the graver business of the day commenced, after taking a sketch of the scene, to return to the venda.

It was about 11 o'clock when we again mounted our horses, passing for some distance through picturesque groves of pines scattered on gentle elevations, with little else to interest us, till, reaching some higher ground free from trees, we enjoyed a fine view of a well-cultivated country below us, in a broad plain, with the township of Feira to our right; a broad belt of yellow sand and the vast Atlantic glittering blue and bright beyond.

We rode on for several miles, in sight of the ocean, that element I so much love, till we entered the small town of St. Antonio d'Oliveira. It contains several good-sized houses and a church, with a statue, highly gilt and painted, in front of it, of the archangel Michael trampling the devil underfoot, who, in the shape of a bronzed-coloured gentleman with horns, looks up as if the angel was pressing most disagreeably heavy on his back.

A league or so further on we passed through another town, Pinhiero de Bemposta, about the same size as the former, and tolerably neat and clean. Indeed, this part of the country is thickly studded with towns and villages, built on the banks of the many streams which here find their way to the ocean.

Passing over a wide table-land, we came to the

wretched-looking village of Albergaria Nova, whence a short league over a broad gravel road through pine-groves brought us to a larger place called Albergaria Velha, which contains the best inn on the road between Oporto and Coimbra; and here travellers generally pass the night. We however wished to push on to Sardão, two leagues further, in order to reach Busaco early in the day. Ordering our horses therefore a sop of Indian-corn bread and wine, we addressed ourselves to the lady of the house to know what she would give us for dinner. She was not in the sweetest of humours when she heard that we intended to quit her mansion that evening; and I had much difficulty in persuading her that we were well aware that the hostelry at Sardão was inferior to hers, but that the prior of Busaco expecting us to breakfast, we could not disappoint so good a man. To this last excuse she had nothing to answer; for her brother, who keeps the inn with her, is likewise a priest. He had gone out for a walk, so we did not see him. She had two brothers that owned the hotel, both priests, whose musical talents were not unknown to me; one tinkling his guitar, while the other sang. I inquired after them. She shook her head. "Ah! Senhor, God has taken one to himself, and the other who is spared has but little *gosto* for music now; but, Senhor, he would be happy to rouse himself, and to strike you off a modinha, if you would honour him by staying, and he would sit up and chat all the evening with you." I regretted that time would not allow us that pleasure; and then renewed my attacks

to discover what there was to eat. Alas! I found that there was salt-fish alone, which would take more than half an hour to boil, and there might be some mutton at the butcher's, which would take still longer to stew; thus at length we were driven to satisfy our hunger on hard eggs, water-melon, and green wine.

When our arrieiro arrived his salutation was, "We have arrived well, thanks be to God, at the end of our first day's journey."

"I hope we may, my friend, before dark; but we have a little further to go yet," I answered.

"Impossible, Senhor! the sun will set, the horses will die, we shall be robbed and murdered, if we don't break our necks: out of this inn I won't move," said the fellow sulkily.

"Ah! my friend, you mistake me. Go on you must, or you shall go back to-morrow morning. I can easily procure a man to guide us, and take care of the beasts."

Josè looked astonished, for he saw I was in earnest; but he still protested that it was a most dangerous road to travel at night, rugged in the extreme, and abounding in robbers. "Then buy two or three torches in case night should overtake us," I said. "Not for worlds, Senhor; the light would shew us to the robbers, while we could not see them, and not a bullet would miss its aim." I laughed at his fears, real or pretended; for I had some suspicion that they were the latter.

"We have nearly an hour of day-light, so bring out the horses and let us ride on, my friend: we are

in search of adventures, and shall be delighted to meet with one, though I fear there is not a respectable band of brigands in the whole of Portugal."

We heard Josè grumbling most lustily, and giving vent to sundry strange oaths, as he entered the stable to lead forth our steeds, during which time I bade farewell to the priest's old maiden sister, whose heart I had won by a few well-timed compliments; and she now regarded us more with compassion than anger, as persons about to hazard their lives in a dangerous exploit.

The sun was sinking over a grove of tall pine-trees as we rode forth from the village; Josè entreating us not to leave him behind, assuring us, on his word of honour, that we should lose ourselves if we did. For two miles or so we found the road excellent, and had we not wished to keep Josè with us, we might easily have reached Sardão before dark. It was a lovely evening, the air calm and balmy, the hedges composed of a shrub emitting a most delicious odour, while the crickets chirruped merrily, and the birds sent forth their evening song of praise.

We passed a hamlet in a grove of cork-trees, denuded of their bark up to the branches. This operation is performed every three years, the cork taking that time to grow to its former thickness. Far larger quantities than usual have, during the last two years, been exported from the country, since the Portuguese have learned to dress it; and it now vies in every respect with the best produced in France, and is also, I believe, cheaper. This is one of the many produc-

tions which Portugal can exchange advantageously for the manufactures of England.

We now came in sight of the Vouga, winding among picturesque banks with green meadows on one side below us. Descending the hill on a bad piece of road, we crossed the river by a long bridge. This stream was of considerable importance during the military operations of the allied Portuguese and British armies opposing the French. The country appeared pretty, but the fast-closing shades of evening prevented my forming any satisfactory opinion on the subject: of the road, however, we had nothing to complain.

We rode on for nearly a league in the dark, Josè amusing us with accounts of robberies and murders which had occurred from persons madly travelling at night. Once in the Algarves he himself had been the sufferer, at thoughts of which his ire boiled up. "Ah! that is the place for rogues and vagabonds to flourish; full of caves, on large plains and woods, where no one can find them," he cried. "I was travelling through a wood, in attendance on two Coimbra students, who were in a great hurry, and would not listen to my warnings: well, suddenly a number of men sprang out on us, dragged us from our beasts, stripped us nearly naked, and then bound us to separate trees, where we were left shivering, till in the morning some countrymen passing released us. The luggage was taken, but the mules were feeding close at hand, for the robbers were afraid to carry them off, as they were all marked, and would have been recognized. I thought we should never have got warm again, or the students'

teeth have ceased chattering. That affair made me sick of adventures for the rest of my life; and I hope you, Senhors, are not destined to share the like fate."

Although robberies on the highways rarely occur in the northern parts of Portugal; yet, but a short time ago, an acquaintance of mine met with a very disagreeable adventure in the province of the Algarves. He was travelling with a friend from St. Ubes towards Lisbon, when one of their arrieiros was excessively impertinent, so he kicked the fellow down stairs and dismissed him. The fellow went away vowing vengeance, and my friend was cautioned against the results of his vindictive threats. Being a high-spirited man to whom the fear of danger was unknown, he thought no more of the subject; but continued his journey in the direction he proposed. He and his companion had not however proceeded far, when, being slightly in advance, he saw a man in the centre of the road before him. Thinking the stranger was a beggar leaning on a stick, he rode towards him, on which the man suddenly lifted a gun, and presented it at him. Instantly my friend drew a pistol, and would have fired, but his companion cried out that there was another behind with a gun, and turning round he saw the muzzles of several projecting from the thickets on each side of the road. Resistance was useless, so he quietly waited to see what would occur. Several armed men now advanced, completely surrounding him, and using the most abusive epithets, they stripped him of all his valuables. Some threatened to shoot him, if he made any resistance; and when he requested them to allow

him to retain a ring, an heir-loom in his family, though he promised them three times its value, they sternly refused. "Come, let us kill him," they cried; "it will serve him right." "No, no," answered their captain; "we have found a good booty, and if we injure an Englishman, we shall be hunted out till every one of us have our necks twisted." They then took the money of his companion, who was in no other way ill-used, and again heaping every species of abuse on my friend, made their escape. He could gain no kind of satisfaction, nor could he in any way criminate the arrieiro, although there was no doubt of his being the author of the outrage. I do not give this account to foster the notion that robberies are common in Portugal; for, on the contrary, they are very rare. I suspect that in Spain he would not have escaped with his life.

When travelling in the dark the road appears much longer; and thus the second league seemed to us twice the length of the first, although the night-air, after the heat of the day, was delightful, our ears being regaled with the merry chirrup of the crickets, while innumerable fire-flies cast their pale flashes of light in every direction. We crossed a small stream by a bridge, and soon after entered a considerable village called Aguida, on a river of the same name, which communicates with the lake of Aveiro, and thence with the sea, affording also, by means of a canal, water-communication and fertility to a considerable tract of country. Passing through the village, or rather town, it may be called, we crossed the river by another long bridge; and ascending a hill, reached

the town of Sardão. Of the place I can say but little, except that, being the centre of an agricultural and wine-district, a large quantity of produce passes through it towards the sea.

Of our inn I can say more. It was small and dirty, the entrance being through the kitchen. We were shewn into the one large room of the house, having two recesses with beds in them, on which it was proposed people should sleep; though certain pre-occupants allowed no intruders to woo the balmy god undisturbed. The house also was full of drovers who had come to buy cattle for the Lisbon market, and who till a late hour continued passing through our apartment on their way to some back chamber appropriated to their use, and where, wrapped up in horse-cloths, they lay huddled together laughing and talking most provokingly. While supper was preparing we amused ourselves, I in making notes, and my friend in sketching one of the curious brass lamps in general use throughout the country. On the top of a tall stem is a brass shade to screen the eyes, and round it are hung by chains pincers, extinguisher, picker, and a small pan to hold the snuff. It is, I suspect, a remnant of Moorish times. On the table we found a Portuguese spelling-book copied from that English one most renowned when I was a child. Our land-lady was teaching her little boy to read from it. Round the room were hung coloured prints, from scriptural subjects, very similar to those found in an English country inn, though these were French. One was of the Prodigal Son returning home, dressed in top-boots and a green coat!

The sound of the mules' bells on a wide heath, or on the mountain-side, is passing sweet to the traveller's ears, but far from pleasant did I think them, as their noise, accompanied by no very fragrant odours, ascended through sundry wide chinks in the boarding of the room. We afterwards discovered the use of the said chinks; namely, to enable the master to look down into the stable to observe if his beasts are feeding; few persons being so fastidious as to object to the stench and noise. I have seen a trap-door for the same purpose in many inns; the stables being invariably beneath the sitting-rooms.

For some time I lay awake on my hard bed. Tinkle, tinkle, tinkle, went the bells, and munch, munch, munch, went the mules—cock-a-doodle-doo went the cocks—hop, skip and jump—bite, bite, bite, went certain other animals, while my moral being was engrossed by an earnest wish that the bells would cease, and that the drovers, the mules, and all other animals, whether of the biped, quadruped, or insect tribes, would go to sleep, until at last the coy deity threw his mantle of mystery over my soul; the confused sounds and odours still however mingling in my troubled dreams.

This was, it must be remembered, my first night away from a comfortable home; for afterwards neither the tinkling of mules' bells, the crowing of cocks, the biting of insects, the sound of voices, or the odours of stables, had any effect on my nerves; a day's hard work invariably insuring a sound sleep at night.

SKETCH XIX.

Road between Sardão and Busaco. Enchanting Scene on approaching the Convent of Busaco. External appearance of the Conventual Buildings. Noble Avenue: numerous small Chapels on each side. Sad desecration of them. Introduced to the Prior of the Convent. In company with him examine the Interior. The Church. Historical Notices of the Establishment. Visit to the Battle-field of Busaco. Magnificent and extensive View. Conversation with the benevolent Prior, and hearty Valediction. Push on to Coimbra, where we arrive shortly before midnight. Excellent Accommodation at the Hotel of the Passo do Conde.

By daybreak we were in the saddle; the pure, fresh, life-giving air exhilarating our spirits to a degree we never experience in the crowded atmosphere of a city; and our steeds participating in our feelings, away we gaily trotted along the high road towards Lisbon.

On each side of us were large vineyards, mostly on level, or but slightly undulating ground. The wine produced in this district though palatable when new, possesses a peculiar taste, and is of a thin, light nature, very inferior to that from the banks of the Upper Douro. Being embarked at Figueira, it is known by the name of Bairrada or Figueira wine in the English market. Formerly, while the price of Douro wine was high, it was at times sent overland to Villa Nova, and shipped at a low price as inferior port; but the difference between the productions of the two grapes is easily discoverable, and no Oporto merchant, regarding the credit of his mark, or his own respectability, would admit it into his lodges. There being little stone in this neighbourhood, the houses are

mostly built of brick in the shape of the old Roman tile, to which, during a long residence in Oporto, our eyes had become so unaccustomed, that when first observing them in the walls of a dilapidated cottage we hurried towards the spot, fancying we had come upon the remains of some building of the time when the sway of that once mighty empire extended over these realms. A few moments' examination of the hoary ruin discovered to us our mistake.

Leaving the vineyards, we entered a district of olive-trees: first a few scattered ones appearing, and then vast groves, tinting the face of nature far and wide with their sombre hue. The olives intended for salting are picked early in November, but those destined for the oil-press are allowed to hang on the trees till the end of December.

A chain of mountains, which form nearly a circle, in the province of Beira-Alta was now seen rising to our left; the part to the north being denominated the Caramulo, and that to the south reaching to the Mondego, the Serra de Busaco; a few rugged tracks over them affording the only passage by which they can be crossed—even then with difficulty, as the French under Massena discovered.

A road on our left appearing to lead directly to the foot of the cone-shaped pinnacle, on which the convent, like an eagle's nest embosomed in trees, is situated, we were anxious to follow it, but being assured by a labourer in the fields that there was a shorter path further on, we unfortunately went in search of it. At last we discovered and pursued a

narrow winding path, leading off from the high road, which conducted us full a league out of our way, though we were amply repaid by some lovely scenery we should not otherwise have enjoyed. We soon found ourselves among a labyrinthine maze of hills and hillocks; round some, and over others of which, we wound our devious way, inquiring the direction to be pursued at the numerous hamlets through which we passed, till again the lofty conical mountain of Busaco appeared before us, like a beacon rising far above the ocean of rocky mounds among which we were labouring. Looking back, as after some time we commenced the ascent of its steep sides, we were delighted with the varied beauty of the surrounding scenery. On each side of us, overhung by graceful trees, were lofty rocks, moss-covered, rugged, and in many places worn by the winter's torrents into cool and shady caverns, whence murmuring rills issued forth, affording a refreshing draught to our wearied steeds. Before us were the fertile vales and swelling hills we had just passed over; a wide plain, broken by forests of tall pines beyond them; with the bright silvery sea in the distance, a blue transparent gauze like a mantle of haze being thrown over the prospect, through which the face of nature appeared sparkling with life and light. Tearing ourselves from the contemplation of the enchanting scene, we followed a steep rough path, most painful to our horses' feet, winding up the mountain between many trees, the oak, the ash, and the chestnut, mingled together, till we found ourselves on a platform with the garden-

gate of the convent directly before us, and, towering above it, a grove of the most superb cedars and cypresses in Europe.

The front of the edifice before which we stood was also unlike anything we had hitherto seen, being covered completely with a rough mosaic of many coloured stones, except the parts occupied by two stone slabs, on which are engraven the bulls issued by his holiness the Pope for the foundation of the convent. In the centre was a large gate, now closed, on each side of it a small door, one of which was fortunately open. The interior of the building, consisting of two arched ways, and some small chambers like guard-rooms, was ornamented with the same sort of mosaic work as the outside, giving it the appearance of a large grotto, the effect of the whole being curious, and admirably suited in truth to the style of the surrounding scenery.

We at once dispatched our arrieiro to announce our arrival, and to pray for admittance through the portals for our weary beasts, but he soon returned saying he could find no one ; we therefore proceeded ourselves on foot in the hopes of meeting with more success. On entering within the confines of the once sacredly secluded domains, we almost forgot all else, in our delight at finding ourselves in a most superb and lovely avenue, composed of trees of every description, the cedars of Lebanon towering above all ; the cypress, the elm, the oak, and fifty others, looking like pigmies by their sides. The wide-spreading boughs overhead cast a thick and grateful shade on the path

along which we proceeded; with the hill-side on our right covered with wood rising far above us, while that to the left sloped steeply down, though the lofty trees which clothed it shut out the scenery beyond. The solemn yet not oppressive gloom of this walk made it a fit resort for meditation and prayer to the pious brotherhood, and might well be desired by the poet as a spot dedicated to solitude, where he might give full scope to his thoughts and feelings.

We passed on each side, at short distances apart, numerous small chapels, their fronts ornamented with mosaic work, their interiors being filled with wooden figures representing some scriptural subject, like those of the Bom Jesus of Braga. Many of the figures had been sadly defaced in wanton mischief; hands and arms lopped off, noses irreverently flattened, eyes plucked out. St. Antonio appears as if he had truly led the regiment of which he was once colonel, to battle, and lost a leg in the service of Dom Miguel. St. Peter, deprived of his arms, can no more unlock the gates of heaven, than can the angel Gabriel, who had descended to earth, get back without his wings; while St. Elizabeth looks with a melancholy expression of countenance (as most mothers would on a like occasion) on the headless body of her infant Saint John, which she holds out in her arms. Where the archangel Michael in bygone times trampled the prince of darkness beneath his feet, his sable majesty has now got the uppermost, whilst his antagonist lies disabled before him; and St. Paul, who formerly occupied a post over the way, stands quietly by with-

out offering his aid. We laugh now at the description, but we felt otherwise at the time. It is no pleasant sight to see altars overthrown, and chapels unroofed, as here; this havoc made, too, not by men of a different faith to the former owners of those domains, but by those still professing and believing the religion of their fathers. They, at least, might have escaped the effects of civil broils; and we were happy to find that the government of the country have, with correct taste, attempted to put a stop to further aggressions, by placing the former prior of the establishment as a steward to manage the property, and to save from destruction the magnificent trees growing on it, which might otherwise too probably have fallen victims to the exterminating axe. We were told by some of the neighbouring peasantry that the good prior is allowed to reside on the scene of his former power by the particular mediation of the pope, but I suspect his holiness has not interfered on the subject: the government, without any respect to his religious qualifications, knew him to be an honest man, and required such a one to take care of the estate.

After proceeding about the eighth of a mile, we came suddenly before a long low building, with a porch in front, the whole covered with the same sort of rough mosaic as the gateway, and having at a little distance the appearance of a large shell-grotto. In the centre of a wide terrace before us stood the emblem of our faith, a stone cross, one arm rudely lopped off; a type of the condition to which the church has been brought at the present day. Below, at the foot of a flight of

steps leading to the wood, grew two superb cedars, still flourishing proudly, regardless of the decay around: yet a few strokes of the woodman's axe, and they too may fall a prey to rude man's insensate propensity to destroy. In keeping with the rest of the building, the front door, at which we knocked, was covered with rough cork. We waited some time ere we knocked again. No one came. We hallooed loudly. No answer was returned; the noise of our blows reverberating through the deserted passages. We then went round the building, and entered a farm-yard where pigs and fowls were feeding, and a dog running out to meet us, but not to bark, showed us the place was still inhabited. Calling out as we advanced, and finding a door unclosed, we entered a long corridor with cells opening on each side, our four-footed friend wagging his tail, and running before as if to show us the way. We were yet shouting through the apparently deserted halls, when a man appeared in the working dress of a farm-servant, but whose straight short hair and peculiar cast of countenance betrayed the ex-friar.

He civilly asked us, in a low calm voice, what we wanted.

"We come to pay our respects to the senhor prior," I answered. "We trust he is well, and will not object to receive visitors."

"The prior is in his cell, and will be happy to see you. I will conduct you to him," he responded, and led the way along a corridor to the right. "The senhor prior," he said, as with a slight inclination of the

head he withdrew, on the appearance of a venerable figure, whom we at once recognized as the good prior, albeit his costume was rather in disarray, though of a clerical colour. He had buckled shoes on his feet, and on his head the scull-cap of a priest, from beneath which escaped a few silvery locks. His cheeks were full and ruddy, though his figure was not heavily corpulent; and the expression of his countenance, though far from intellectual, was mild and benignant.

Telling him that a mutual friend at Oporto had recommended us to call on him, and to beg him to shew us the beauties of his convent, he embraced us kindly, welcoming us to his abode. "You shall see all that remains, my friends, though, alas! sadly changed from former days. Follow me," he said. He first led us through several corridors, the ceilings and doors of which were lined with rough cork, and the walls hung with paintings of full-length figures of monks and priests, all executed, he told us, by the friars of his order. One was that of a Carmelite monk, in the attitude they observed while performing the duty of silence; such, except for a short time during the day, they professed to keep when within the walls of Busaco. Another picture, considered a chef-d'œuvre, was that of a monk performing penance, in a contrite posture. A third, I recollect, was a skeleton clothed in gorgeous canonicals, with golden utensils and heaps of money scattered at his feet, to exhibit the vanity of all worldly riches. Some were sadly torn and defaced. On looking towards these, our reverend conductor sighed deeply, as he saw their state of premature

decay. It must be owned, however, as productions of art, there was little cause to regret their loss. He then led us into a wing of the building, which we were surprised to find so extensive, containing several chambers, opening from a hall with a long table down it. "This was our guest-house in the days of our prosperity," he observed. "Here visitors might reside, cut off from all communication with the brotherhood, and here before the battle your great duke established his quarters. In that room he slept. See, I have painted the name of 'Wellington' over the door." And he pointed to the largest chamber in the corner, where was roughly painted the name of the illustrious chief. The ceilings and doors of these rooms were also lined with cork, which, as the prior observed, keeps them cool in summer and warm in winter.

As we were gazing from the window a large party of respectable-looking country-people, among whom were some pretty dark-eyed girls, made their appearance below, and respectfully saluting our venerable friend, requested permission to visit the church. He having assented, we accompanied them. The church, to which one of the corridors conducted us, is appropriately adorned, much in the same rustic style as the rest of the building. Its chief treasure is a half figure of a Magdalene, a gift from his holiness the pope. It is a most exquisite piece of carving, the countenance truly lovely, though grief and repentance have stamped the mark of care upon her fair brow; a pearly tear is just dropping from her soft downcast eyes, now dimmed by sorrow; the blood seems to circulate through

the azure veins of her alabaster neck, and delicate hands, which are clasped together in the attitude of prayer. The figure is of wood, and considerably smaller than life, or it would not have been exactly the most appropriate object for the contemplation of the ascetic monks, whose profession was to endeavour to banish for ever from their thoughts all the soft allurements of the sex. Yet surely the youthful acolyte might have been pardoned for worshipping at so fair a shrine.

There are two curious altar-pieces of figures, in painted clay, executed with much spirit, representing some stories from scripture. The church is also ornamented with much rude carving, and an abundance of paint, the taste of which we could not highly praise.

As we remembered that we were in the house of God, and conducted ourselves with the reverence due to it, we completely won the good father's heart, and were looked upon by the rest of the party as "*pious Catholics*." One old lady, in particular, made many inquiries about the state of religion in England, and seemed much surprised to hear that we not only possessed churches, priests, and saints' days, but that there were actually numerous convents.

"Ah, my friends!" chimed the prior, "England is one of the few religious countries which, alas! are left in the world; for there our holy faith flourishes in all its purity, and there, if I am not misinformed, the inhabitants are rapidly becoming converted to a belief in the truth. Yes, senhores, it was in your country our order was first established; and, though I may

not live to see the day, I feel assured that all your countrymen will be again joined in one flock, and that the ceremonies and institutions of our church will be there restored to their pristine splendour."

We bowed to the compliment implied, and were evidently looked upon by the old lady as mirrors of piety and faith.

On quitting the church, we requested permission to breakfast before proceeding further. The prior accordingly showed us back to the large hall where the duke had dined; there we spread the repast our saddle-bags contained, but it being a fast-day peculiar to the order of our venerable friend, he could not join us, though he sent us some fine melons, and a bottle of light wine, which we found very refreshing. The prior had promised to accompany us over the field of battle; so, after breakfast, while waiting for him, we sat under the shade of the lofty cedars smoking our cigars, I making a sketch of the convent. We had scarcely concluded our task, when the old man appeared habited in a long dark coat and oilskin-covered hat, such as is generally worn by country priests, and with a thick stick in his hand.

Though numbering upwards of sixty-five years, he was still hale and hearty, never, as he told us, suffering from illness; indeed, he strode so hastily on, that we were fain to exert ourselves in order to keep up with him. As we walked along by a winding path through this mountain-forest of gigantic trees, he gave us much information regarding the establishment over which he formerly presided. His order was that of the Bare-

footed Carmelites, and this convent was merely a temporary abode for such of the members of the entire community as desired to perform penance for their sins by silence, mortifications, and fasting; the prior only, and a lay brother, being constant residents. At the time of the abolition of the monastic orders there were sixteen friars performing penance there; no one, on any plea, was ever admitted within the walls of the garden, and but once a week were men allowed to enter the gates. The establishment of these houses of penitence was a capital idea of the jovial friars, who could thus get rid of any brother whose melancholy might cast a gloom over their own spirits, or whose too strict observance of their rules might seem to censure their neglect. The pure air and lovely scenery of this truly magnificent place might, however, prove abundant compensation to many persons for abstinence from their usual sources of gratification. It much pleased me to see the delight and pride the old man took in the superb trees beneath whose lofty branches we walked: if the bark of any of them had been torn off, he examined the tree carefully to see that it had sustained no real injury, and looking at one which had some time before been wantonly wounded by a hatchet, he sighed as if it had been some loved child. Good old man! I shall not forget him.

After proceeding some way along the dark wood, through whose tangled canopy scarce a gleam of sunshine could penetrate, he suddenly threw open a door in the garden-wall, and we found ourselves in the full blaze of day on the bare side of a lofty mountain,

with a deep glen below us, and hills rising in succession beyond.

"Here," said the prior, "was posted, with their backs to this wall, the left wing of the Allied army. Along that rugged road, over yon sea of hills, did the invading French under Massena advance, and up this steep ravine just before us did they daringly attempt to climb, led on by the fierce *Maneta*. Oh, heavens! it was a fearful sight when the wild *Sayotas* (the Highland regiments) charged with loud shouts, and in a moment of time six hundred dead or dying Frenchmen strewed the side of the mountain."

We had with us an admirable plan of the battle, copied from Napier's *History of the Peninsular War*, and observing at some distance higher up an overhanging rock whence the whole scene of the contest could be viewed, we requested the prior to wait till we climbed towards it. The distance was longer than we expected, and the hill more rugged and steep, but when once the spot was gained, we were fully repaid for our toil, and here, with the map before us, and Napier's graphic account vivid in our memories, we fought the battle o'er again.

The mountain of Busaco is rather more than six miles in extent, forming a slight curve; one end rising abruptly from the river Mondego, and the other resting on the Serra de Caramulo, a lofty rugged range which extends to the Vouga, and over which there is but one narrow and intricate pathway. The mountains which extend from the southern end of Busaco in an easterly direction to the lofty Serra d'Estrella,

present an insuperable barrier to the march of an army; and hence the French, who had a short time before commenced their third invasion of Portugal by the way of Almeida and Viseu, were compelled either to make a long circuit by Guarda, or to pass over the hill of Busaco, in order to reach Lisbon, which capital Massena hoped to capture before the Allies had time to make any dispositions for its defence.

It must be remembered that the French marshal had above sixty thousand veterans under his command, while Lord Wellington could scarcely bring fifty thousand men into line, more than half of which were untried soldiers. Most of the Portuguese, indeed, were but raw recruits, yet they behaved most nobly. One regiment in particular, the eighth Portuguese, commanded by Colonel Douglas, with only two other English officers in it, Major Bermingham and Captain Marley, charged the French with the bayonet abreast of their British allies, endeavouring, by outstripping them, to be the first in action. My most respected and gallant friend Major M——, formerly of the Buffs, assured me that he saw that very regiment perform their first parade in Oporto scarcely six weeks before the battle, it being composed of lads under twenty years of age, who had been marched in from all parts of the country with their hands tied to prevent their deserting, and who had probably before that time never fired off a musket. The French, who had been taught to despise the Portuguese, would not credit to whom they had been opposed, declaring that they were British troops dressed up in blue uni-

forms to deceive them. From that time forward, however, the enemy learned duly to appreciate the bravery and soldierly qualities of the Portuguese troops, as did the British officers who commanded them, or were brought in contact with them.

But to return to the description of Busaco. The convent is situated in a hollow in the western side of the mountain, a lofty conical peak rising directly above it clothed with trees, which also form a thick belt round the building, completely concealing it from the world beyond. To the south of this peak, and directly behind the rock on which we stood, was an extent of flat ground, on which a body of British cavalry were drawn up; some way further on the third division were posted; and then comes a deep and rugged rent across the mountain: on the other side of this rent was placed the fifth division; while on a rising ground yet further off, Lord Hill's division formed the extreme right of the line. From the hills on which the French were drawn up on the other side of the valley, Busaco presents the appearance of a lofty chain of five or six mountain-summits, with a rugged and almost precipitous face. It was up the steep and wild ravine towards the right that the most desperate attack under Reynier was made, when the French with intrepid bravery actually gained the summit of the mountain, but the Allies with equal valour again charging them, drove them headlong over the rocks, and re-occupied the important position. Never did the French show greater daring than on this occasion. Scarcely had the day dawned when,

in two divisions, they commenced the attack on the heights, the guns of the Allies playing in vain on their columns as they advanced; nor was it till two o'clock that they were finally compelled to desist from the attempt, with the loss of four thousand five hundred men, while the Allies did not lose more than thirteen hundred.

The French then retreating, crossed the Serra de Caramulo to Mealhada, and as soon as Lord Wellington observed them moving he withdrew his army through Coimbra to the lines of Torres Vedras, which he successfully defended.

Having fully satisfied ourselves of the respective positions of the contending armies, we returned to the worthy prior, who was patiently waiting for us at the garden-gate. Thinking we had seen all that was worth visiting, we were about to take our departure, when he persuaded us, fortunately for ourselves, to accompany him still further. "I will now lead you, my friends, to a spot which has few equals," he said, as soon as we consented to follow him.

Knowing that we were pressed for time, the old man strode bravely up the steep ascent among the trees. He in truth showed but little of the character of the lazy indolent monk, such as most people imagine, but proved himself a fine hearty old fellow, for whom we felt every minute our respect increasing.

Unexpectedly we found ourselves on the summit of the conical hill. Here, with a flight of stone steps leading to it, stands a high cross; a cheering landmark seen from afar by the wave-tossed mariner. It

goes by the name of the Cruz de Cima, and amid the havoc which has been made around it has escaped desecration. The view was indeed superb. Below us, looking over the waving tops of the trees which clothed the mount to the south, was the silvery stream of the Mondego, winding amid rich green plains towards the ocean, Figueira at its embouchure being clearly discernible. On its willow-bordered banks, at the end of a rugged chain of mountains, and situated on rising ground, the lofty tower and vast convents of Coimbra were seen; while to the north, close to a shallow lake, the churches and houses of Aveiro glittered in the sunbeams, a chain of hills closing Oporto from our sight. To the west the ever-lovely ocean, now blue and calm, bounded the view, and to the south-east a confused mass of mountain ranges extended towards the Serra d'Estrella, or Mountain of the Star, to visit which was one of the purposes of our journey. To the north was the Caramulo range, and to the west were hills not so lofty or rugged, but fully as confused as those to the south-east. In a valley to the north, and just beyond the walls of the convent-garden, is a little chapel, and near it are some mineral springs much esteemed for their fortifying powers.

The wind blew so coolly in this elevated position, that we were afraid of remaining long exposed to it; so taking a sip from our brandy flask, of which our reverend guide partook, we with regret were obliged to return to the lower world.

On each side of the path, as we descended the

hill, we passed numerous chapels like those of the Bom Jesus of Braga, but generally smaller, nor were the figures so well made. In one spot, overshadowed by lofty trees, was a building with a balcony in front, in which were several figures as large as life representing Jesus our Lord exhibited to the people by Pilate. A sort of court-yard in front in which we, with several other persons stood, gave an idea of reality to the scene, which was in perfect keeping, though, instead of the spectators crying out, "Crucify him! crucify him!" all stood in a reverential posture with uncovered heads, as if the figures had truly an existence. This representation must have great effect on the imagination of the uneducated visitors, who are not likely to perceive what the better-instructed might discover to be incongruous in it. For my own part, I see nothing objectionable in these groups of figures; they are to the illiterate country-people what the illustrated Bibles of the Protestants are to their children; they teach them scripture-history by the easiest means they have of learning it. They do not think of worshipping the figures, though they take off their hats as they pass them, with probably a far more reverential feeling of the events they are intended to represent than Protestant children are apt to experience as they turn over the leaves of their picture Bibles.

Such were my thoughts as I expressed my regret to the good old friar that equal attention had not been paid to this spot as to the Bom Jesus of Braga.

"Alas! my friend," he answered with a sigh,

"the people of the Minho are good and pious; they still have a respect for our holy religion; but those in this neigbourhood, they neither worship God, nor fear the devil." He was silent for a minute, when, turning round to me, he continued, "Ah! my dear friend, why is it so? Why are men becoming thus bad? Why are all these differences in religious and political opinion? I will tell you. It is all owing to that dreadful revolution in the Church which your wicked king Henry the Eighth allowed to take place. His bad example has been followed in this country. Ah me! ah me! When it will end I know not."

I expressed my conviction that great improvements were taking place in the social condition of the nation, and that I trusted all civil broils were henceforth banished the land.

"But religion, in what a state is that?" he exclaimed. "Behold the houses of God overthrown, these chapels in ruins, the figures of the saints desecrated. They have mouths to speak."

I assured him that, though differing in faith from him, I much regretted seeing so lovely a spot allowed to go to ruin. At the same time I observed, that I considered the religious state of the country was far better than he described it.

He shook his head. He then looked hard at us, for he had evidently till now supposed us to be "*good Catholics*." However, his kinder feelings quickly gained the mastery, and suddenly embracing us affectionately, he cried, "Oh, my dear children, that we were

all joined under one banner—the one which Christ has raised—how happy then would the world be! Alas! I shall never see that day."

"Such has been the wish of many good men since Christ first visited the world," I answered. I scarcely knew what to say; for seeing how much the old man was in earnest I would not for much have uttered a word to hurt his feelings.

Near the summit a rock projected from the side of the mountain. "Here," said the prior, "a holy hermit lived and died." And, leading us round by a narrow path, we found ourselves in a small chamber cut in the rock. "This was his cell, and that his stone couch," continued our venerable guide. "Here was the chapel where he worshipped, and in this small basin cut in the rock, filled with a pure stream issuing from above, did he wash his hands before performing his devotions. This next room was his kitchen, and from the well in the terrace did he draw the water for cooking."

"The worthy hermit was," I observed, "a man of taste."

In front of this most diminutive abode (for each room was about five feet square) was a stone terrace of corresponding size, with a balustrade in front, and flower-beds at the side, the little well the friar spoke of being in the centre. Hence we obtained a most enchanting view, more pleasing, though not so grand as that from the topmost peak. In this little paradise did the recluse pass his days, occupied in prayer and in the contemplation of the beauties of nature. We

were so enchanted with the spot, that we agreed we should like to fit up the hermitage, and resort thither to give ourselves up to the full power of our muse when in a poetical mood. As we walked on in friendly converse with the old man, taking off our hats respectfully, we looked in at each of the chapels on the way. Below the hermitage was one partly cut in the rock, with a similar terrace in front of it, whence the view was equally beautiful; but we had short time to enjoy the prospect, for the day was now far advanced, and we were obliged to hurry back to the convent, the prior assuring us we had not seen half the beauties of the place.

He then invited us to visit his cell, whence we had drawn him on our arrival. We could not refuse his bidding, so he forthwith led us through a long corridor to a small chamber with a pleasant prospect from the window. It contained a pallet-bed, a standing desk with drawers, a small table, and a low bench. Insisting on our being seated on the bench against the wall, he produced some sweet biscuits, which he told us some ladies had sent him, and a bottle of very old light wine, with which he continued filling our glasses, nor would he listen to our excuses till we had finished it; no disagreeable task, in truth, after our hot walk. He then seated himself on his bed.

"Here," he said, "you see me as I have been for the last thirty years. In my habit alone am I altered. I am not given to change. My friar's robes have been taken away, but my cell has been respected."

Kind old man! Most sincerely do I hope that he will be allowed to end his days in peace in that beautiful spot, and from the glow of health on his cheek they promise to extend to many years.

He has two friars to attend on him, and to assist him in taking care of the property. While walking through the grounds, we presented him with a small sum to be expended as he judged fit; nor did it appear unacceptable. We now rose to bid him farewell. He accompanied us into the yard, where our servant was preparing our horses, and as we mounted he gave us an affectionate parting embrace, begging us to return again to see him, which we promised, if possible, to do. We rode back through the avenue, one of the other friars being ready to open the gates to give us exit, and a parting benediction. We then descended by the same rugged path by which we had come, turning to our left at the bottom of the hill, and passing through numerous olive-groves, whose sombre hue seemed to affect even our spirits.

We soon stopped at a small hamlet to give Josè a glass of wine, that he might cease his grumbling at our having delayed so long. The women were sitting spinning at their doors, numerous children were playing in the dirt before them, while one little chubby fellow ran crying in a fright before our horses, to the amusement of its father and elder brothers. Several other men were in the fields hard by, and all these people—men, women, and children—were some of the finest specimens of the human race I have ever seen. They were apparently, by their great similarity to each

other, one family; or at all events, near relations; and this was very probable, as it is much the custom of the Portuguese to keep together. I have constantly seen three generations living under one roof.

We could proceed but slowly, for our baggage-mule had cast a shoe early in the day, his hoof was broken, and no farrier was near—a chain of troubles not calculated to add sweetness to Josè's temper. While yet a league from Fornos, we passed an ox-cart filled with people in holiday costume, reclining in straw at the bottom, and shaded by a canopy of green boughs, singing merrily as they bumped along.

For several miles we passed through a succession of olive-groves, comprehending many thousands of trees, which produce a vast quantity of oil.

Darkness closed in on us before we could reach Fornos, and when at length we arrived there, we found that the farrier was in the cart we had left many miles behind. We therefore, while our beasts were put into a stable, entered a venda, and sat ourselves down on a bench among a party of Spanish smugglers; the landlord and his wife joining in the conversation. Our companions pressed us to join them in their libations; but I had not yet brought myself to drink from a garlic-tinged mouth-piece, though soon after, ordering a fresh glass of wine, I drank to their healths, and then handed it round to the company, with whom we were discussing the different habits and customs of our respective nations in a most friendly mood. The landlord was an acute, sensible fellow. Speaking of the long and short

leagues, which, being no real measurement, afforded but slight assistance to the traveller in computing his distance, he told us that the leagues were reckoned from one village or town to another. If about an hour's walk, it is a league; if much more, a long league; and when above two hours, two leagues, little or great, according to circumstances. We agreed that his explanation was the best we had heard. He also had been at the battle of Busaco, and seen the whole of the engagement, having been employed with his mule to carry up powder and shot. The *Sayotas*, the petticoat-men, as he called the Highlanders, seemed to have excited his greatest astonishment, by their headlong charges and loud shouts.

At last the mule was shod, and we were again *en route*.

"Any commands for Oporto?" said Josè, as we rode out of the stable.

It was a fine star-light night, so we could easily distinguish our way. "You see, Senhor," he continued, when we had got clear of the village, "I am cautious. If any of those strangers are inclined to rob us, they will set off towards Oporto, while we are travelling south; and now, by your leave, instead of keeping the high road, we will turn off to the right, by a by-path with which I am acquainted. It is as short as the other, with a sandy road; and above all things, robbers are not likely to be watching there."

"You seem very much afraid of robbers," I observed, as we rode amicably along.

"I have good reason, Senhor, for the chances are,

they will shoot me, that I may tell no tales," he continued.

I cannot say whether the man was really a coward, or whether, preferring a warm stable or the kitchen-fire to a dark road, he wished to frighten us into stopping for the night wherever the sun set. Along the borders of Campos do Mondego we passed some broad, highly irrigated, and fertile meadows, through which the Mondego finds its course to the sea. At last the towers and convents of Coimbra appeared before us, like some huge castle rising against the sky. Passing through the wide street of St. Sofia, lined on each side with vast convents, we reached the hotel of the Passo do Conde at eleven o'clock.

We were surprised and delighted to be shewn to a commodious room, into which in about five minutes a most active waiter brought us supper, no unwelcome sight. I had thought the active and ever-ready Manoel, of Braga, was the best waiter in Portugal, but this man much surpassed him; and to appreciate the advantage of a good servant one must travel in Portugal. There are very few like the maid at the inn my friend Coningsby encountered. Our beds also were excellent.

SKETCH XX.

Deliver Letters of Introduction at Coimbra. Its *tout ensemble.* Convents and Churches. University. The Jesuit Professors displaced. Interior of the College: Examination Hall, Chapel, Library, and Underground Chambers. Interesting View from the Roof. Visit to the Observatory. Laboratory. Museum: Collections in various Sciences. Miscellanies. Gallant Defence of Coimbra in the 13th Century. Unedifying Ceremonies of the Romish Church. Lovely Terrace on the brow of a hill. The Quinta das Lagrimas and Donna Inez de Castro. Canal dos Amores. Ultra-liberal Spirit of the University. Church and Convent of Santa Cruz. Market-place. Scenery of the Mondego.

Having several letters of introduction from friends at Oporto, we started early with a guide to deliver them. Among others was one to the civil governor of the district, Senhor J. J. D. L. de Vasconcellos, and one to Don Agostino Josè Pinto d'Almeida, Lente do Collegio, whom we found at home, and whose polite attentions prevented the necessity of presenting any others; except one to the secretary of the governor, whom I found to be an old acquaintance, a son of the Conde de Terrena Josè. A relation of Don Agostino, to whom we had a letter, was gone to survey the road over the Ponte de Murcella, on through Viseu, to Almeida, which is to be macadamized; but some doubts were expressed as to when it would be commenced. Don Agostino is director of all the public works in progress in the province. Being unable to go out, in consequence of a paralytic attack, he sent his nephew Senhor Alexandre Pinto as our cicerone.

Before commencing an account of our day's adventures, I will give a slight sketch of the outward

appearance of Coimbra. It stands on several hills springing abruptly from the Mondego, over which river extends a long stone bridge, built, it is said, on the ruins of two former ones. On the southern side rise wood-crowned banks, interspersed with quintas and convents. Among the former is the far-famed Quinta das Lagrimas, and the principal of the latter is the extensive Convent of Santa Clara. In the centre of the city the lofty and elegant tower of the Observatory shoots up, close to the chief buildings of the university, one side of which is on the summit of a precipice directly above the river. Far around are seen the towers of numerous handsome churches and vast monastic piles.

The streets are narrow and steep, and are paved with small, round, dark flint-stones, most disagreeable to walk on. The exterior of the private houses have no pretensions to architectural beauty, being in general mean and shabby; though their interior is far superior to their outside promise. A tree in the north part of the city, of such vast dimensions that it requires several men joining hands to embrace it, is one of the curiosities of Coimbra. It is, I believe, of equal antiquity with the city itself.

Coimbra contains a great number of convents, whose lofty and dreary walls occupy one half of the city; the broad street of St. Sofia having few other edifices in it. Some of those formerly belonging to the friars are now converted into a variety of beneficial purposes, as public offices, barracks, schools, and two are employed as hospitals. It is impossible to find

uses for them all, so that many are falling into decay. Some ground belonging to one has been employed as a Botanical Garden, which is a credit to the city, and to the members of the university, who support it.

The environs of Coimbra afford a number of beautiful views, which I will describe in the course of my rambles. There are many handsome churches attached to the convents, and two cathedrals, an old and a new one, the latter a superb temple formerly belonging to the Jesuits' College. Indeed, Coimbra is a most interesting and picturesque city. Camoens thus describes it:—

> "Here castle-walls in warlike grandeur lour,
> Here cities swell, and lofty temples tower:
> In wealth and grandeur each with other vies;
> When old and loved the parent-monarch dies;"

as Mickle elegantly translates the lines of the immortal bard. The last line refers to the good King Dinis, one of the earliest monarchs of Portugal, who in 1306 instituted the University of Coimbra.

The university was once or twice removed to Lisbon, undergoing many vicissitudes, till the accession of the Marquis of Pombal to power. It had at that time fallen into much decay and disrepute, owing to the greater number of the professors' chairs being possessed by the Jesuits. On the banishment of that insidious sect from the shores of Portugal, the great minister completely remodelled the university, appointing the most learned and enlightened men to fill the vacant chairs. It has ever since enjoyed a deservedly high reputation as a seat of learning, and as being

the birthplace and nurse of those liberal sentiments which have at length happily succeeded in overturning despotism and bigotry throughout the land. So convinced were the absolute party of this fact, that no sooner had the usurper Miguel established himself on the throne, than the Jesuits were recalled, and they had almost worked their way into the professors' chairs, in order to crush in the bud every thought of freedom, every enlightened sentiment, in the bosoms of their pupils, when Dom Pedro, with his justly styled Liberating Army, arrived in the country, and again banished them from the land. Thither I pray Heaven they may never return, to curb with their iron rule the advancement of the national mind.

Taking leave of Don Agostino we accompanied Senhor Pinto to the new Sè, or Cathedral, formerly the church of the Jesuits' convent, one part of which building has been converted into a museum, another into an hospital. The interior architecture of the Sè is plain and handsome, free from that tawdry gilding which disfigures so many churches. The arches are round; the pillars of granite square and massive; the altars and organ-loft are richly carved and gilt. The outside, however, is of that nondescript style which I so much dislike, more suited to an Indian temple than to a church of Christians, who have the models of Greece and Rome by which to direct their taste.

We next called on Senhor Brandão, who directed that the Museum should be opened for us, but business prevented us enjoying the pleasure of his company.

Taking leave of him we repaired to the College,

entering a handsome square through an archway called the iron gate. To the right is a large building, a flight of steps leading to it, with an elegant colonnade in front, known by the classic name of *Via Latina*. This building, which extends along the greater part of another side of the square, is the college containing the residence of the rector, the halls, and lecture-rooms. In front of us was the Library, a building with a handsome exterior: a view of the river and opposite hills was seen from the corner of the square, and on our left rose the lofty tower of the Observatory.

Entering the college we were first shewn the public examination hall, which has a roof ornamented with arabesque paintings of great antiquity, and is hung round with portraits of all the sovereigns of Portugal, including her present majesty. Some of the portraits are well executed. We then entered a smaller hall in the same style, for private examinations, containing the portraits of all the rectors; and grim-looking characters they were, all having been friars, except the first, and the present one, the much-esteemed Conde de Terrena. The floors of these halls are covered with Indian matting; the furniture is of ancient form; the whole kept in the most perfect order, and having a very antique appearance. Passing through several long galleries lined with paintings, we looked down from balconies above each, into the different lecture-rooms, eight or ten in number, which open into a quadrangle in the centre of the building. They are of elegant shape, good size, and newly painted. Indeed, by a rule of the college, all the buildings are painted, within and without, every

summer-vacation, which gives them a clean and neat appearance, also betokening a flourishing condition. How sadly did I afterwards contrast with this the once far-famed university of Salamanca!

We were shewn the large hall in which Pombal held a court at the re-opening of the university on its reformation. It is left precisely as it was in those days, and had been for many previous centuries. The colours on the ceiling have been admirably preserved. The chapel contains a fine organ; the roof is painted in arabesque; the lower part of the walls are covered with blue tiles; and on the wall of the gallery is painted an open door so well, that it is impossible to discover the deceit till close to it. The taste of this species of ornament is questionable, but when all is in such admirable order, it is impossible to find fault with what was at one time probably much admired. In a corner of the college is a tower—the old observatory, I believe.

The librarian, a tall young man with a sickly hue on his intelligent countenance, habited in the college-dress, which is similar to that of Oxford, now politely opened the doors of the Library. It consists of three compartments, forming one lofty and beautiful hall. The roof is richly painted, a cornice of gold and blue running round the walls; and though some centuries old, the colours retain their pristine brightness. The book-cases, which reach to the ceiling, are of black wood, ornamented with arabesque patterns in gold, which give it a very handsome appearance. As in most large libraries, there are ladders which slide in and out to reach the upper shelves.

As far as I could judge by a cursory glance, the books are well arranged. Among them are all the Greek and Roman authors, and many of the best modern works. I examined a fine edition of Virgil, and one of Camoens, containing a beautiful print of the death of Ines de Castro. Among the French authors I saw Beaulieu and Voltaire. There were also numerous translations of English works into French, and among those that claimed England for their paternity was Doomsday Book.

The furniture of the hall is in perfect keeping with the rest, the chairs and tables being of dark wood, exquisitely carved.

Opening from the hall are several small closets, appropriated to the use of those students who have taken the degree of doctor.

We next descended to a story under ground, used till 1836 as a prison for refractory students; but now, all divisions being thrown down, it is fitted up as a library—itself a large hall well lighted, and full of books. I ought to observe, that as the college stands on the edge of a precipice, the walls at the back run to a considerable depth below the front. We were amused with the lines cut deep into the massive shutters by the captives of former days. One ran thus: "Here the most illustrious and most excellent J. J. N. P. was most unjustly confined, by the severe tyranny of his judges. Think of it, ye Muses, and mourn for his fate." Below this story is another, now filled with an immense number of useless theological works, brought from the suppressed convents,

and here left to rot. This story is divided into dungeons, so artfully arranged, that they might have defied the efforts of any captive to break from them. It was at one time the prison of the city, where the worst criminals were confined; a novel appropriation of a portion of the collegiate buildings! The only entrance is from above, into a hall, from which passages with many turnings branch off; there being at each turning a massive iron door, and the dungeon at the furthest end. Such is the fate of the productions of many a learned monk—to be consigned to a dungeon; probably their real desert.

Ascending again, we walked round the galleries of the hall, and thence on to the roof, whence we could examine the antique architecture of the college, and admire a lovely view spread before us. On one side was the city with its towers and convents, glittering in the sun, on the other, the silvery stream of the shallow Mondego, the convent of Santa Clara, surrounded by woody heights, and the Quinta das Lagrimas. Looking up the stream was the Botanical Garden, the Ecclesiastical College, and a surgical hospital, formerly a convent, while hills rose above hills in long succession in the distance.

The gentlemen of the Observatory next received us with the greatest politeness. This building is perfect in its kind, and in excellent order, furnished with all the best astronomical instruments. From the second story extends a broad terrace over the roof of the lower part, from which the view is most lovely. The roof and part of the wall of the tower open, to

allow of observations being taken; and in the centre also of the roof is a circular aperture, through which the transit of any planet is observed. Other observatories are, I believe, on the same principle. This one yearly sends forth an almanack, which is esteemed very correct: also, if I am rightly informed, astronomical tables for mariners.

Leaving the Praça do Collegio we proceeded to the Museum, a very fine structure; the architecture simple and chaste. The front elevation contains about thirty windows, having a good space between them. Before the Museum is a large open plot of ground, well paved, and facing it is a building used as a laboratory. This also is in excellent taste, and admirably suited to the purpose. Having no upper story, it covers a large extent of ground, the grand hall forming the centre.

I was much pleased when looking around as I stood in the square, waiting for the doors being opened, and talking to some of the gentlemen of the university who were so polite as to accompany us, to discover nothing which could in the least offend the eye. All was in perfect order, good taste, and unexceptionably clean; the air blowing pure and fresh from the hills to the south, on which side the praça is perfectly open. On the doors of the Laboratory being opened, we entered the building. In the centre is an extensive and lofty lecture-room, well arranged for seeing as well as hearing. On each side are large rooms, where in glass-cases the apparatus used for illustration is preserved. But the Laboratory itself,

or experiment-hall, is most worthy of notice. It is a large lofty room, fitted with stone tables, a variety of furnaces, bellows and retorts, on the grandest scale. The building contains likewise a geological lecture-room, and rooms to preserve specimens, besides a small smelting room; which we severally inspected. Workmen were here also employed in whitewashing and cleaning every corner of the place.

We then crossed to the Museum, entering first the anatomical department to the right, which is properly kept separate from the other part. The lecture-hall is very handsome, the seats for the pupils rising in a circle round the lecturer's table, which is composed of a single slab of fine marble, and turns on a pivot. In another apartment were several other anatomical tables and surgical apparatus, swinging beds, &c.

By a decree of Pombal all dead bodies within three leagues of Coimbra were, if demanded, sent to the Anatomical Museum; but now the numerous hospitals afford abundance of subjects.

The collection of skeletons, mummies, and lusus naturæ, is said to be very good; but though obliged to go through the rooms, I am no connoisseur in such matters. Among the curiosities was the head of a man killed in battle, literally cut into slices, and a youthful cyclops, who, had he lived, would have been truly a beauty—a formidable rival to Tom Thumb, and unequalled in all melodramatic pieces of horror! The curtains which separate the rooms are composed of red damask, with the arms of the college worked on them.

Returning to the street we entered the centre hall,

which is remarkably handsome. A fine flight of steps leads to the upper story, ornamented much in the same style as the Bank of England. A vast number of rooms running the whole length of this floor, and communicating by side-doors, have a fine effect. The conchological collection is considered the best. The entomological is incomplete; but a large number of insects are daily expected from the Brazils. In minerals it is very rich. The director, who appeared to take most interest in birds and quadrupeds, regretted that in that department he was unable to complete the collection, owing to the want of funds for the purpose, and the neglect of those commissioned to procure specimens. The truth is, that government, owing to serious disputes with the students, who have taken part against it with the ultra-liberal faction, have refused to make the usual allowance to the support of the university. The Museum, the Botanical Gardens, and other public institutions, are now therefore entirely dependent on the liberality or means of the members of the university. That they have not been backward with their contributions, the good order in which it is kept amply proves.

There is a large and curious collection of scientific instruments from the earliest days down to the present time, shewing the great improvements which have taken place: also a variety of models of agricultural machines. But I confess, that with the cursory view I was alone able to take, I was more interested with a miscellaneous collection of curiosities, begun in the despotic days of Pombal, who ordained

that anything possessing more than ordinary interest should be sent hither for preservation; entirely regardless of the owner's unwillingness to part with it. Among them is a magnet, said to be the most powerful in the world: it lifts the enormous weight of 2786 pounds. We each of us hung on to an iron ring attracted by it; though I cannot say it drew the pen-knives from our pockets. After witnessing its powers, one could almost believe the wonderful adventures of the renowned Sinbad. There is a small one lifting eight pounds. We saw a skein of thread, spun by a lady of a neighbouring village, in the days of Pombal, of as fine a texture as that produced by the silk-worm. How delicate indeed must have been her sense of feeling! She would have been able, I suspect, to have read with her fingers. There were the very muskets with which the brave old João de Castro defended Diu against the infidels, and, equally esteemed, the bolts of the ancient gates of the city.

When the old fortifications of Coimbra were pulled down, the university demanded the gates, much revered as relics of bygone times; but finding them too large to admit within the building, they were satisfied with the bolts alone. In the year 1248 Coimbra was governed by a brave soldier, Dom Martin de Freitas, who had been appointed to the command by his king, Sancho the Second. Alfonso, the brother of the king, having revolted against his sovereign, whom he deposed, and declared himself regent, laid siege to the city, which Dom Martin defended for

several months with the most determined bravery, refusing to accede to all propositions of capitulation, till he had received orders from his master to yield up his command. Sancho dying in captivity during the continuation of the contest, a rumour of the event reached the city ; but the sturdy governor still refused to yield till he had ascertained the accuracy of the report. He demanded therefore of Alfonso a truce, which being obtained, he proceeded to Toledo, where Sancho was buried, and having satisfied himself that his beloved master was no more, by a sight of his inanimate body, he deposited on it the keys of the city, asking permission of the dead king to present them to the regent. Interpreting silence into acquiescence, he resumed them, and returning to Coimbra, opened the gates to Alfonso. The new king was so struck with the gallantry and loyalty of Freitas, that he confirmed him in the governorship of the city without exacting homage, settling at the same time a rich estate on his heirs. Dom Martin, however, looking on Alfonso as an usurper, and considering that he had but performed his duty to his master, not only refused to accept the boon, but laid his curse upon such of his heirs to the fourth generation as should take advantage of the grant.

We examined a large collection of South American and Indian arms, dresses, and other implements. I was interested also with looking over 1263 samples of the beautiful woods of Brazil ; indeed, there were many other objects well worthy of notice, of which it was impossible to make a satisfactory examination.

Museums I have found in general to leave but little more impression on my recollection than raree shows, except visited for some specific purpose; both the eye and mind becoming confused by the variety of objects. I can only say that of Coimbra is well worthy of frequent visits, and regret that there is no printed catalogue for reference.

Taking leave of the courteous and well-informed director, we returned down a steep flint-paved street to our hotel to dinner.

The meal was scarcely concluded, when our obliging friend Senhor Pinto again called to accompany us on a further excursion. L—— was unable to go out, as he was suffering from what may seem extraordinary, the bite of a black fly. He saw the insect pitch on his hand on the day we left Oporto, when he cried out from the sharp pain it inflicted. His arm had now swelled to the shoulder, with most annoying sensations: some fomentations however, applied by that paragon of Portuguese waiters, Romão, restored him to health by the morning.

Senhor Pinto first led me up the hill through the Praça de Feira, to visit the Botanical Gardens, passing the picturesque old sè, and beneath a lofty aqueduct, which leads from the hills to the convent of Santa Cruz. A handsome iron railing with bronze ornaments, the work of a native of Coimbra, surrounds the gardens; the gateway having then been finished but a month. It is situated on the sides of a valley with numerous terraces, one rising above another, covered with rare and fine trees. The lower and

warmer situations are devoted to tropical plants, many of which thrive here without the protection of glass. On one side are the conservatories, some of large dimensions being in the course of erection. Above them is a convent, now belonging to the Botanical Society. On the opposite side, on a height surrounded by trees, is the hospital for surgical cases; also formerly a convent. Indeed, by the abolition of the monastic orders not only were a most useless and baneful set of beings sent into the world to gain their livelihood by industry, but a number of commodious buildings were thus gained to society for beneficial purposes. While some may pity the fate of the aged monks, unable to work, the younger ones are really deserving of no commiseration; and I cannot but rejoice that Dom Pedro had the wisdom and courage thus boldly to root them out from the land. The latter, if they can but read, and have strength of body, can always, in the broad field Portugal offers for exertion, gain an honest livelihood; and they ought to be grateful for being thus emancipated from their bonds.

Near the gardens, with a broad space before it, is the Priests' College, or rather seminary. The church attached to it is small, but richly ornamented; the roof supported by fine marble columns. We entered at a side door, beyond which we did not advance, for the body of the church was occupied by the students, some thirty in number, who, habited in clerical robes, were on their knees with their hands raised before them, I presume either learning to chant the service, or at prayer. Judging by their looks, they were

evidently performing an uninteresting task; and I could not but regret that so much time should be spent by these young men—for they were no longer boys—in going through what they would thus learn to view as an irksome, instead of a pleasing duty—the outpouring of the soul in gratitude to the all-powerful and benign Framer of the Universe.

To those who understand clearly the ceremonies of the Romish church, they are far from senseless; not a single ornament, not a single performance, but has its signification; but how few of those even among the priesthood comprehend them rightly! Many of the learned advocates of that church, initiated in its mysteries argue, that as all the ceremonies are typical of its spiritual existence, *ergo* they are useful, if not essential. But considering that the greater number of its members are ignorant, even of what those ceremonies are meant to represent, I cannot but think that they are calculated to lead many towards the confines of idolatry, and to make others despise or ridicule what may perhaps be worthy of respect. Either let all persons arriving at the age of discretion be instructed in the proper meaning of those ceremonies, or let them be disused; for as now performed they lead more to infidelity and irreligion than the works of all the atheistical authors combined.

This is my opinion, with every respect to the members of that communion be it spoken, in regard to the ritual and visible adornments of the Romish Church: her customs and points of belief it is beyond my province to discuss. In a word, I, with the Church

of England, prefer the most simple order consistent with the decent celebration of public worship, and she, on the other hand, the most gorgeous and operose, and which few, confessedly, even of her own communion fully appreciate. Such were the reflections to which the scene I had witnessed in the priests' splendid church gave rise.

Issuing thence, and leaving the youthful acolytes still uttering their monotonous chant, we proceeded to a far different scene, a lovely terrace on the brow of a neighbouring hill, overshadowed by trees, and looking down upon a rich valley, full of the dark-leaved olive, the glistening orange, and other fruit-bearing trees, surrounding many a smiling cottage or country-house; the gardens and fields divided by hedge-rows of the prickly pear or cactus. Hither, their favourite resort on a summer-evening, come the students to pass the short cool hour before night sets in, with their light guitars, and to enjoy the fresh breeze from the mountains. I have before observed that the Portuguese of all ranks are passionately fond of music. It is also much practised by the students, many of whom possessing fine voices, they have here, beneath the unconfined vault of heaven, full scope for their exercise.

Having still an hour of day-light before us, I was anxious to visit the far-famed Quinta das Lagrimas—the Garden of Tears—the scene of the loves of Dom Pedro and the beautiful, though, alas! not guiltless Donna Inez de Castro, and of her early and tragical death. Proceeding down a steep hill, beneath the

walls of the university, we crossed the long stone bridge over the Mondego.

Close to the river, near the south end of the bridge, are the ruins of the ancient convent of Santa Clara, founded by queen Isabella. By a sudden rise of the river, swelled by the melting of the snows of winter, the waters rushed in and overwhelmed it; the ground being now almost on a level with the arch of the front entrance. The present convent, a building of great extent, stands considerably higher up the hill, with one belonging formerly to an order of friars just below it. The left wing was appropriated to the reception of guests. Till of late years, there being but few inns in the country, and those of the very worst description, nearly every monastic edifice had a certain portion set apart for the reception of travellers, who were expected to contribute a trifle for their entertainment, probably in support of the church of the convent. The convent of Santa Clara received, like those of the same name at Lisbon and Oporto, none but the daughters of fidalgos, the nobles, within its walls. It still contains a large number of inmates, about fifty, including ladies and servants. All men must rejoice that no fresh victims can henceforth be offered up on those shrines of the worst species of bigotry and superstition, or rather sacrificed to enrich, by the money they might otherwise have claimed, some elder brother, or more happy sister with a titled husband.

Turning to the left, along the banks of the river, we soon came to the *Canal dos Amores*, "the Canal

of Love," so called from a tradition that Donna Inez used to send her letters down it, in a little boat, from the fountain whence it leads, to Dom Pedro, who anxiously awaited them by the river's side. Part of the garden has been lately enclosed, and a handsome house built near the site of her residence, the property of Senhor Antonio Maria Azorio, a fidalgo and peer of the realm, though he has no title. He has attempted to enclose the whole, and to shut up a pathway from time immemorial open to the public, leading to that fountain by whose side the fair dame sat and mourned, bathed in pearl-like tears which rivalled in purity the drops from the sparkling stream. The inhabitants of the city resisted the sacrilegious attempt; and when the owner found that he could not succeed, he allowed the spot to fall into neglect, hoping thus to deprive it of its attractions.

Thither skirting the walls of the garden we next wended our way. I approached it with reverential steps, for to a lover of the verses of the immortal Camoens it is classic ground. The bright water bubbles out of a small cavern in a high moss-covered rock, over-topped by several magnificent cedars and a drooping willow, which throws a cool, thick shade below and upon the silvery streamlet flowing from it. The streamlet falls into a tank, whence issues the *Canal dos Amores*, the conveyer, perchance, of many a tender epistle from the lovely lady to her lord. The very seat on which she reclined beneath the overhanging rock still remains, the hard stone, (yet not so hard as the hearts of her ruthless destroyers,) worn by the

corroding effect of time. I stooped down, and drank a deep draught of the cool water—fit beverage for a poet, but alas! I invoked the spirit of the fountain in vain; it inspired me not, as that of Helicon is famed to animate its votaries. By the side of the fountain is a tablet, with some of the exquisite lines of Camoens engraved on it, erected by that gallant soldier, general Sir Nicholas Trant, when governor of the province.

Such is the *Fonte dos Amores*, the same which Camoens has described in lines whose beauty and pathos no poet has ever surpassed. The view from the Quinta dos Amores, as seen from beneath the wide-spreading trees, is very beautiful—the lofty walls, and towers of Coimbra rising on the other side of the Mondego, with the neighbouring hills, and far blue mountains.

Unwillingly I quitted it, but the shades of evening were fast approaching, and my companion was wearied, I suspect, with his exertions in my service. We sat for awhile to rest upon the bridge, where groups of grave priests and masters of the colleges were collected, to enjoy the fresh air, which blew up the river, while my friend gave me much information regarding the university. It contains at present about eleven hundred students, who have the means at their disposal of acquiring every branch of human learning. There are professors of most of the ancient and modern languages usually taught in our own universities—one of English Literature among the number.

Besides the University there is a fine building, the

interior of which I did not see, called the *Collegio das Artes*, containing halls for the reception of the younger students. In this are the chairs of six professors of languages.

The general political principles of the university are, I regret to say, ultra-liberal, verging on, if not quite, republicanism. Harmless in most cases they would be, as men generally find good reason, when they enter active life, to change their first opinions on that subject; but here, where recourse to arms is by no means unusual, they are highly dangerous. It requires no prophet to foretel that Portugal will become, or attempt to become, a republic before many years are passed. Costa Cabral appears to be much out of favour in Coimbra; indeed, the students exhibited their feelings in the most open manner during the late revolt of the Baron de Bom Fim; one of those unhappy events which, if they occur much oftener, will be the ruin of the country.

It was dark when I returned to my inn, where a luxurious tea awaited me, prepared by Romão. To shew what mistaken ideas travellers unacquainted with the language may give of a country, Mr. Kinsey, in his *Portugal Illustrated*, says, "The narrow windows to which they could scarcely reach of their room looked into a pigstye;" and consequently one naturally supposes such to be the style of the inns in one of the most important and civilized cities in the kingdom! He and his companion were, however, at the mercy of their arrieiro, who took them to his favourite

hotel, where he would himself be best served. Now ours was a large clean room, with French windows opening on a balcony, and furnished with two sofas, washing-stands, tubs, abundance of chairs and tables, and other conveniences. Indeed, at no English inn could we have been better accommodated. Private sitting-rooms without beds are not thought of, but there is in most inns a large public dining-room.

I rose by day-break on Friday morning, and walked forth alone along the willow-bordered banks of the Mondego. The air was pure and cool, like that of a fine spring morning in England; it felt almost frosty: the dew-drops yet hung upon the boughs, sparkling, as the rays of the rising sun first glanced upon them, and the birds sung with gladness, as they felt his warming beams. I sat down beneath a willow, and made a sketch of the picturesque city. The path led along the top of a high bank bordered by willows, between which on one side was seen the river, and on the other the fertile green fields of the Mondego. Further on works of considerable magnitude are in progress to improve the navigation, by narrowing the stream, under the direction of Don Agostino. Along the banks also are numerous water-wheels to irrigate the meadows.

Returning to breakfast, I afterwards hasted with L—— to visit the church of the Santa Cruz, standing in a praça of that name, and belonging to the enormous and now-suppressed convent of the same. A large stone screen stands outside, in front of the

church, and is of that style of architecture to which I know not what name to give. The interior of the church is handsome, of the simple Gothic, with several fine tombs, the principal being on each side of the high altar; that on the right, of Sancho, king of Portugal, and on the left of Alfonzo Henrique, both in the florid Gothic style, and much alike. I sketched that of Alfonzo. On the lid of a sarcophagus is a recumbent figure in armour, with a crown on his head, which rests on a cushion, and at his feet a lion couchant: above, in alto relievo on the wall, hangs his helmet and gauntlets. A richly-worked stone canopy reaches to the roof, and is supported by delicate pointed columns, having the statue of the virgin and child in the centre, with those of the saints on each side and above. There is also a pulpit elegantly carved in stone. The walls are covered with blue tiles, on which are represented various scripture-subjects.

We then, quitting the church, went round the gardens, which, like the convent, have fallen into a sad state of decay. The entrance-court is now used as a market-place, and several of the buildings surrounding it were fitting up for some public purpose. This convent is one of the largest in Portugal: it appears almost a city in itself, straggling over a wide extent of ground, up and down hills, with extensive gardens stretching a considerable way to the east of the city.

In our way back to the inn we passed the market-place, crowded with women seated either on mats

spread on the ground, or on baskets reversed, generally beneath large coloured umbrellas surrounded by their fruit and vegetables, fish, pottery-ware, or cheese.

The melons and oranges of Coimbra are remarkably fine, and in profuse abundance. Two or three of the former were sent up to us at dinner, to cut up, and select the one to our taste—their flesh was green and very sweet. In speaking of the markets, I must mention a privilege possessed by the students, which, among many others granted them by the Marquis of Pombal, would, in the present day, be considered very despotic and unjust. In the market called *Feira dos Studantes*, opposite the new sè, the students have the first choice of all that is sold; so that if they see anything for which they have a fancy purchased by another person, they may compel him to give it up at the market-price.

While L—— was packing up, I called on Don Agostino, to thank him for his politeness, and the trouble his nephew had taken in our service. He seemed pleased at my attention, which was indeed but my duty, and gave me much valuable information relating to Portugal. His countenance betokened an intellectual mind, full of thought; and I was convinced that he was in every way qualified to fill the honourable office he held. He spoke in the most candid and unbigoted way of the faults of his countrymen; and although from his age belonging really to the older generation, yet perfectly ready to admire and adopt the numerous improvements of the present; a rare qualification in an old man, who in general approves

only of that to which he is accustomed. When otherwise, I always consider it a sign of a superior mind. Although each movement caused him pain, and notwithstanding my entreaties to prevent him, he rose to bid me farewell, expressing his hopes with a kind smile, that I would return and see the university to greater advantage, at some future period, during term-time.

I confess that from the short visit I made I have been unable in my account of it to do justice to Coimbra. I saw and heard a great deal, and I have noted most that I saw, but there are many places I did not visit. It is not, however, mere sight-seeing which can afford most interest in such a place as Coimbra. As the University of Portugal, it is the nursery of the statesmen, the legislators, the professors of law, of medicine, the leaders of parties; indeed, of the talent of the country. It is by mixing among the students, by conversing with them, by learning their habits and ideas, that one may be able to prophesy, with some approach to accuracy, the destinies of the kingdom, in which most of them must perform some prominent part.

The greater number of my Portuguese acquaintance have been members of the university, some of the younger ones still are so. They are one and all endued with a liberal spirit, a respect for intellectual superiority, and have such a hatred of tyranny that they will never again submit to a despotic government; but, as is generally the case, when men have but lately thrown off the yoke, pressing for so many

centuries on their necks, I fear they run much risk of falling into the opposite extreme, and that in shunning the galling goad of a despotic sovereign, they may bring upon themselvelves a heavier curse—the anarchy of a republic. I trust, however, they may take warning in time, and turn aside from the course which many now seem so eager to pursue.

If all the heads of the colleges (*Lente* is the title they bear) are like my friend Don Agostino, few universities can boast of more intellectual or better educated men. There are at present, as before observed, eleven hundred students. Murphy, writing about fifty years ago, says there were in his time three thousand.

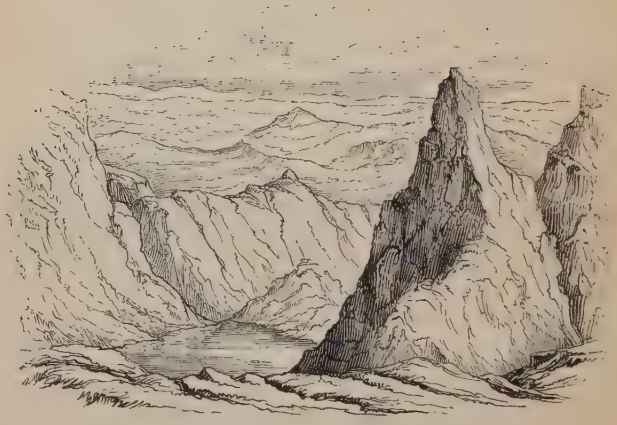
I cannot but advert here to the carelessness, the ignorance, or the malice, of some of the writers who have spoken of Coimbra. One person, Costigan, I believe, declares that the Coimbra students are employed chiefly in making wooden toothpicks, which they sell about the country, to gain a livelihood, Murphy gives but a very meagre account of the city. Mr. Kinsey, as an Oxford man, was much interested in the subject, and gives a more correct and longer account of it.

Toothpicks are made in vast quantities in the neighbourhood of Coimbra, though certainly not by the students. They are far more luxurious and refined implements than those used in England, as a fresh one is taken between every course, and immediately broken. They are cut, not from the orange-tree, as is generally supposed, but from the clean white

wood of the willows which grow on the banks of the Mondego. I should advise all my friends in England to take them into use forthwith, in preference to silver, steel, or—*horrendum dicere!*—quill!

The Mondego offers as great a variety of scenery as the Douro, though far inferior both in size and beauty—first rushing through lofty rock-formed mountains, and then gliding calmly between green meadows. It is navigable fourteen leagues (about forty miles) from its mouth; that is to say, seven leagues above Coimbra. Figueira, at the mouth, is a favourite bathing-place of the inhabitants of the province, who resort there in the autumn in great numbers. The society, it is reported, is then very agreeable; for the fidalgos, who are shut up in their country-houses, far from each other all the rest of the year, then meet on social terms.

SKETCH XXI.



Serra d'Estrella—Os Cantaros.

Leave Coimbra for the Serra d'Estrella. Josè's affection for his Mule exemplified. Ford the Mondego. Wild and Rugged Road. Reach the Village of Ponte de Murcella, where we pass the night. Superb Views on the Road thence. Uniform Civility of the People. Village of St. Romão. Glorious Sunset beyond the Beira Alta. Sleep at the Hospice of St. Romão. Ascent of the Serra d'Estrella. Almost boundless Prospects from different Elevations. Extremely desolate Region. Reach the highest spot in Portugal. Sources of three Rivers. Commence the Descent. Solemn and Mysterious Seclusion of the Dark Lake. Speculations touching its Origin and present Appearance. The Long Lake. Return to the Hospice in the Evening. Advice to Tourists.

By twelve o'clock we mounted our horses to proceed towards the Serra d'Estrella, for though our first stage to the Ponte de Murcella was but four leagues, we were told it was one of the worst roads in Portugal, and would take nearly six hours, and that it was also well-

nigh impossible to follow it in the dark. Passing another portion of the convent of Santa Cruz, near the aqueduct, and leaving the Botanical Gardens on our right, we wound down a steep hill towards the river, but did not cross it for several miles. Looking back down the valley we here enjoyed by far the best view of Coimbra; but I was afraid to lose time in making a sketch. The hedge-rows were formed of aloes, several tropical plants growing about, and in one sheltered spot several of the cacti in the hedges were in full bloom, with rich crimson flowers. After riding some way we were obliged to dismount, to descend a rugged path leading down the sides of a deep gloomy ravine, in which were numerous groves of olive-trees. We had fastened the bridles over the horses' necks, so they came jumping and sliding down, following us with great sagacity. At length we heard a cry from Josè, and looking back, I saw with dismay most of the luggage on the ground, and a small portmanteau containing our money rolling and leaping down with great velocity towards the torrent below, while Josè stood by, uttering sundry strange oaths at the mishap, and inflicting many a blow on the unhappy mule, as though he were in fault. At last, to my great satisfaction, the portmanteau caught in the roots of an olive-tree, and bidding Josè descend for it, we gained a little rest for our four-legged beast.

"That comes of being assisted by servants at an inn!" exclaimed Josè, returning to give another kick to his friend. "Why did you let the luggage off, you beast, you?" Whack, whack, went his stick.

"So, so," I thought; "you, Senhor Josè, were the guilty man, and the mule gets the punishment;" but the mule took it patiently, and so did we, as we sat in the shade beneath an overhanging rock, admiring the beast's sagacity, for the flies annoying his nose, he gradually crept up within the range of my horse's long tail, where he stood, allowing it to whisk about his face, effectually freeing him from his tormentors. Josè would not accept of our assistance, declaring that he, and he alone, knew how properly to secure luggage.

Now it may be supposed that Josè was of a cruel disposition, and had a strong dislike to his mule, but such was not the case; he was, on the contrary, very fond of the beast. When he could get no one else to speak to, he used to talk all day to it, certainly in no very refined language, and always gave it the best food he could procure; but beating it he considered was the best way of proving his love. He followed Solomon's advice, "Spare the rod, spoil the child." When it did anything wrong, he beat it—when it went well, he beat it, to remind it of good behaviour—and when anybody offended him, he beat it, because being accustomed to be beaten, it could bear it better than anybody else; and he felt it requisite, for his own satisfaction, to beat somebody. Now if he had beaten the offending person he would probably have received a *façada** in return, and thus the mule would have lost his master and his food, consequently he was the gainer by being beaten. It was a fine animal—was our *macho*,

* Vulgarly, "a stick in the ribs."

of great size and strength; never making a false step; but his mouth was so hard, that the most severe bit had no effect on it. We discovered that when we got to flat ground, and wished to ride fast. The macho was so attached to the horses, that he always wished to keep in their society; thus, when we trotted on, so did he, nor could Josè's hauling with all his strength, stop him. We found this an excellent way to punish Josè when he had mounted on the top of the baggage; and would thus lead him a hard trot for a mile or so, whenever he had been sulky to us or impudent to any others; but the poor mule always was the sufferer at last. They were odd animals—the man and the beast; but as in both several estimable qualities predominated over the bad, we parted excellent friends in the end.

To return to our journey. At the bottom of the ravine, the road down which could not have been well worse, or it would have been no longer a road, (indeed, in no other country would it be called one,) we mounted our horses, passing through a small village, a short distance from which we reached the Mondego. Though the stream was broad, it was very shallow, and we easily forded it: the view both up and down consisted of lofty hills, rising abruptly from the water, and intersecting each other, covered with pine, olive-trees, or vines. We then ascended for a full league, winding zig-zag up a mountain, first between olive-trees, but soon reached the region of pines. When at the summit, looking back between the tall taper stems of the waving ever-green pines, we were delighted with the superb view we beheld. A sea of

lofty hills, the towering peak of Busaco rising among them, was to the north, with the fields of the Mondego, and the blue ocean beyond; further to the east were seen the wide rocky plains of the Beira Alta, while to the south, numerous green valleys intersected the mountains above Condeixa, and among them the Zezere and the Oereza, with many tortuous windings finding their way towards the sea.

As we were toiling up the steep ascent, we passed a party seated on the soft turf, in a romantically pretty dell, beneath the cool shade of the trees, and employed in the agreeable occupation of dining. It consisted of a gentleman, his servant, a jet-black Newfoundland dog, and a pony of the same sable hue, strong, active, and well groomed. We had just reached the summit, when, having concluded his rural repast, he came trotting after us, saluting us politely, while we regarded with an eye of admiration his handsome little steed. He carried his cloak before him, a valise behind, with saddle-bags, while his servant ran on foot; a most independent way of travelling, which I much admire, for the purpose of examining the country and making sketches. It must be remembered that an active man on foot will in this country knock up any horse in the course of three or four days, and thus one always has a man by one's side to hold the animal, while one ascends a neighbouring height, dives into a sheltered vale, or plunges into the cool sparkling stream. Our acquaintance, we found, carried not only his clothes and food, but his sheets and towels spread out in a case strapped over his saddle,

they forming a soft cushion for it. After exchanging a few common-place expressions of courtesy, coming to a flat piece of road, the only one, by the bye, which we met with during the day, we trotted on. We passed a large village to our right, called Sant Andre de Poyares, where a cattle-fair is held every month.

We proceeded generally on the ridges of the mountains, sometimes however having to descend over loose rolling stones, or rugged crags, into a deep vale, again to climb the opposite height. Across a valley to our right were the range of the mountains of Lozan, and on the same side, in a deep vale, enjoying the unpoetical appellation of Smid, was a large convent of holy sisters. Further on again, on the side of the mountain, was a church with several small chapels attached, called by the very usual title of the Senhora do Monte.

Ascending the bare and rugged Serra de Murcella, with a small chapel on the summit, we looked down upon the river Alva, having the lofty range of the Serra d'Estrella before us, rising, like the back of some huge monster, far above all the neighbouring heights, and also a good mountain-view behind us. Winding down the steep hill, with some risk of toppling over, we passed several wretched hamlets, and at last, crossing the Ponte de Murcella over the Alva, we reached the little village of that name.

"Where is the good hotel you told us we were to find?" I demanded of Josè. "Here, Senhor, here! but where the people are, the diabo knows," he answered, thundering at the door of a tumble-down, deserted-looking edifice.

"This the inn!" I exclaimed with horror.

"Sim, Senhor, sim; and a very good one it was, when I was here last; but things change in this world," was Josè's philosophical answer.

At last a respectable-looking woman appeared in a verandah above us, begging us to wait while she opened the stable-door, where, having seen our horses well cared for, we ourselves mounted a flight of rather ricketty stairs, into a spacious chamber, in a dilapidated condition. A table and three broken chairs were the only furniture it contained: two rooms opened from it, with a bedstead in each: the floor of the one I selected being covered with dry bean-pods. There was, of course, no glass to the windows. The outward appearance of affairs betokened but little prospect of comfort, though a respectable old lady, the mother of our hostess, endeavoured to console us by assuring us all would be put to rights in time.

"But," she added, "the truth is, we have given up expecting travellers; for six months have passed since any slept at this house. Formerly the road was so frequented, that the house was full every night —now no one passes. We made our fortune many years ago, when the British troops were stationed at Guarda and about Almeida, and many were the handsome English officers who stopped here; but though those times are gone for ever, we still would not bid a traveller pass our doors. The last countryman of yours who slept here was a naval officer and his sister, who had been visiting some friends near Viseu. They came with their beds, their servants, their food,

and even their cooking apparatus. They were very good people, and great fidalgos. The lady gave us the Holy Scriptures, and several tracts in Portuguese, which we have carefully kept." By the good woman's exact description I recognized some acquaintance of mine who visited that part of the country at the time referred to.

Formerly any one distributing Bibles and tracts would have incurred some risk from the enmity of the priests; but at present I believe they would not interfere to the annoyance of the giver, as long as the books were given without ostentation; though I fully believe, that the opinion of the clergy is so strong as to the danger of the Bible being read by uninstructed persons, that they would take them away wherever they were found. I do not know whether the innkeepers of the Ponte de Murcella had studied the books to much advantage: they seemed grateful for the gift, and begged me to bear their best remembrances to the donor. They were superior people, though their inn had fallen to decay.

A fowl was now killed, plucked, and in the pot in the course of a few minutes, and while it was boiling, I won the young mother's heart by playing with her children, and the old lady's by listening to her stories. The rooms were cleaned out, the beds made with clean white sheets, and the cloth was spread. During these operations our fellow-traveller arrived on his little black pony, saying it had cast a shoe, and thus delayed him. We were doomed however to a most tantalizing disappointment; a fine

fowl was at last placed on the table, but, alas! neither knives nor jaws could make any impression on it. We had unwisely disdained the broth, and all we could do was to munch, munch, munch—in vain: no nourishment could we extract from the stringy morsels. Some good bread, and the tea we carried, enabled us to satisfy hunger, and left us no reason to complain. Our fellow-traveller having his own provisions, which he politely offered to share with us, was better off, particularly as we did not accept his courtesy; for had we done so, we might have left him but a small portion.

All night long the music of some mills and water-works on the river rang in my ears, to which a whole host of fleas, aroused from a quiet of six months, appeared to be dancing and biting in concert—tempted by me to a ball and supper! Like a good traveller, our companion made himself comfortable with a bed on the floor, his black dog keeping watch at his feet, and thus, talking on various subjects, we all fell fast asleep.

By day-break on the 14th we were on foot, our friend being off before us. Our landlady brought us a basket of peaches, but, like the fowl at supper, though tempting to the eye they were too hard for mastication. I asked if they had no other fruit.

"No, Senhor! no other."

"What! do those fig-trees bear no figs?" I inquired.

"Figos! what, do you call figs fruit?" she cried laughing. "Oh! there are plenty of those!" and

running into the garden she brought us out a basket of most deliciously cool ripe figs, which we devoured while our horses were being saddled. Because there were an abundance, it had never occurred to these good people that figs were worth eating ; another exemplification of the observation that people value in general only what is rare.

Leaving the village we wound up a hill with the stream of the Alva twisting around us, and soon reached a level smooth gravel-road, lined with most magnificent oaks and chestnut-trees, on an elevated ridge, along which we travelled for many miles, with a superb view on each side of us. To the right was a broad valley with park-like scenery, the lofty range of the Serra d'Estrella rising beyond, and on our left, seen between the trees, the broad plains of the province of Beira Alta, extending almost to Lamego. I speak of the Beira Alta as a plain country, for so it appeared to us, seen from our elevated position, but in reality it is very far from being so, intersected as it is by deep ravines and rugged ridges, which much impeded our course when we subsequently traversed it. After riding for some miles through this most enchanting scenery, on a road over which a carriage and horses might be driven at a gallop, could they but once be brought up there, we overtook our friend, who persuaded us not to stop at a certain venda by the wayside, on account of its doubtful reputation, but to wait for breakfast a couple of leagues further on. This much enraged Josè, who it appeared was hungry, and who abused the gentleman in no measured terms. I

at last was obliged to interfere, ordering our man to proceed without another word, which he did in a most sulky humour. We found our friend had not deceived us when we stopped to breakfast, or rather to lunch, at a decent little inn at the Vendas das Galizes. The landlady, who kept a sort of shop (properly the venda) below the inn, we were informed was a most wise woman, who could tell the fortunes of all she saw, and the richest person in the place; her fortune having been made during the Peninsular war. I begged her to exert her skill for me, holding out my hand; but she excused herself, saying it was not by palmistry, but by means of a book, which she had not then by her, that she foretold events. What the book was I could not learn, but probably an almanack which she passed off to her friends who could not read as something mystical.

I amused myself by playing with a most beautiful child, not three years old, whose father, a respectable-looking farmer, was sitting in the venda. He was evidently a pet, dressed rather fantastically, like a page on the stage, his long fair locks hanging down over his shoulders, from beneath a cloth cap ornamented with gold lace.

"Ah!" said the father, who, as well as the other people, seemed much pleased at my noticing the little fellow, "he reminds you of another dearer one whom you have at home."

I answered him that I was not even so blest as to possess a wife. "Then," he said, "will you take him with you, and teach him to read and write, and

to make his fortune? Ah, Senhor, what a blessing it is to be able to read and write!"

The little fellow seemed to understand his father, for, setting up a cry, he threw his arms round his neck, refusing to come near me again. "No, no, Joaquimzinho!" cried the father, returning his child's embrace, "I will not part from you."

"But, can you not teach him yourself?" I asked.

"Alas! no, Senhor; and in this remote place there are few to teach; instruction costs money, and we have little to spare; but we will hope for the best."

This desire for instruction I found general among all the intelligent peasantry with whom I spoke, and in the districts where schools have been established, they eagerly send their children. I trust in a few years to witness them in every hamlet throughout the kingdom: it is thus only that bigotry and superstition can be effectually banished from the land, or that a moral and pure religion can take their place.

After our meal was concluded, I took a sketch of the Serra d'Estrella, in the centre of which appears a huge gap, whence the Alva issues forth, already a considerable torrent.

For the rest of the day we rode slowly along; the heat being great, and we not liking to quit our polite acquaintance, who was disinclined to proceed at a quicker rate. I must here remark, that wherever I have travelled in Portugal, I have met with the utmost civility and attention from the persons I have casually encountered; all being anxious to smooth the difficulties in my way, to make amends for the incon-

veniences of the bad inns and worse roads, and to give every information regarding the country. The gentleman I speak of, who evidently did not belong to the highest rank of society, did all this, kindly inviting us to his house; but as it lay at some distance from our route, we could not accept his hospitality.

I carried a letter of introduction from a Portuguese friend at Oporto, to the Visconde de Mollelos, an old general officer of distinction who had commanded a brigade in the Peninsular war, a friend and brother campaigner of a relation of mine, Sir Charles Ashworth. He also commanded part of Dom Miguel's army during the civil war, when he was esteemed, even by his opponents, for his bravery and humanity, and as a true gallant soldier. His mansion, which we saw from our elevated position, lay in the plain below us to our left; but the fine weather tempted us to proceed to the foot of the serra, in order to explore its dark mysterious lakes and rugged cliffs on the morrow, before the autumnal storms, which might be every day expected, should preclude us from doing so. I afterwards much regretted that we did not pay the intended visit when I heard that the visconde had for several days been expecting us, and had arranged a plan for our seeing the mountain to advantage.

Soon after losing sight of the visconde's house, the road passed close to the edge of a precipice to our right of many hundred feet, where far, far down at the bottom of the deep glen, we could perceive the roofs of a considerable village, close to the borders of the blue and lucid Alva, which wound its way among lofty

cliffs towards the west. It seemed a spot in which none but people possessed with wings to fly from it would have thought of fixing their habitations; for, except the green ledge on which the village was situated, there appeared to be not a particle of level ground for the purposes of agriculture; yet I doubt not, could we have descended into the vale, we should have found numerous spots on its rugged sides which the industry and perseverance of its inhabitants have brought under cultivation.

Several reasons may be assigned for the selection of such sites for villages, where the more level ground is left unreclaimed from a state of nature. Originally such spots were chosen probably on account of their security from the attacks of enemies, and their being out of the route of invading armies; also, from the advantage of the abundance of water, and from the greater luxuriance to which vegetation attains in the shade and shelter of a valley. For my own taste, in spite of its cold and storms, I should prefer a mountain-region, whence I could look down upon the world, to the most secluded and romantic vale with its bounded prospects.

At a small venda, where our friend stopped to feed his pony, we parted from him with many expressions of regard on both sides, and soon afterwards descended towards the village of St. Romão, which we saw before us at the foot of the mountain. High above it appeared the chapels of Nossa Senhora Desterro, at the hospice attached to which we purposed to pass the night. After descending some way, with the deep

glen of the Alva to our right, on the brink of one of whose rugged precipices St. Romão is situated, we entered that village, and passing through it commenced the ascent of the mountains. St. Romão contains a large church dedicated to Nossa Senhora Desterro—Our Lady of the Desert,—numerous dilapidated houses, a stream of pure sparkling water rushing through the narrow tortuous streets. On each side of the path by which we wound up the mountain's side were several small mills, turned by the bright rivulets gushing forth from the face of the rock with a loud murmuring sound. Cool and refreshing were they to us dusty and heated travellers, and more so to our steeds, who drank eagerly from the overflowing tanks placed at the road-side for their accommodation.

Our arrieiro begged us always to allow our horses to drink their fill just before arriving at the end of their day's journey, however heated or tired they might be; and far from suffering from it, we found that they always ate their food the better; indeed, when we were unable to give them water, they frequently would not touch their corn for a considerable time. This was equally the case at their mid-day rest, or in the evening. It is, I believe, the custom of the Tartars to let their horses drink, and to gallop them afterwards up to their stables, and the Portuguese, having probably learned it from the Moors, do the same. It appears to me more consonant to reason than our English habit of allowing a horse almost dying with thirst to wait hours to cool before he is permitted to drink. I myself have never suffered

from drinking of the coldest springs in hot weather, as long as I have kept in exercise afterwards, the arrieiros also doing the same, though they, it must be confessed, prefer the thin green wine of the country.

By the side of the path were several little chapels, and we accompanied numerous pilgrims, who were, like ourselves, bound to the hospice; they for the purpose of paying their early adorations at the principal shrine in the morning.

A gap in the mountain's side, a few hundred feet above the village, forms the entrance to a sheltered glen, or hollow, through which the Alva runs, and in which are situated the chapel, the hospice, and the keeper's cottage. Before passing through it we turned round to witness the glorious refulgence of the setting sun, sinking beyond the far extended plains of the Beira Alta. Words cannot describe that magnificent spectacle: it was such as the inhabitants of cities can never behold—a sight which amply repays the mountain-traveller for his toils and dangers. The fast-fleeting crimson hue, which overspread one-half of the arch of heaven, had already faded away, leaving an intensely dark blue, through which the stars were struggling into life, when we turned to enter the gap between the lofty crags, and after descending a short distance, we soon found ourselves by the side of the chapel, with Senhor Anselmo's cottage on our left, and the bridge and hospederia before us. Senhor Anselmo, the guardian of the establishment, immediately made his appearance, and telling him that we

were recommended to his care by my friend the Rev. Edward Whiteley, the British chaplain at Oporto, who had visited the mountain the previous year, he forthwith conducted us to a room in the hospederia, while our beasts were put into the stable beneath us.

The chapels alone had been built many years, and visited by numerous pious pilgrims with much toil, when it occurred to the present worthy prior of St. Romão, that a house where they might rest for the night would much benefit them, and add perhaps to the revenue of Our Lady of the Desert. He therefore ordered the construction of the present long low building, with a number of small rooms, and two kitchens above and stables below, where all pilgrims are allowed free quarters for one night. Each room contains a table and bench, but is destitute of any other furniture; and into one of them we were now shewn.

Anselmo was a character, as will soon be discovered, and we found him one exactly suited to our purpose: at first, however, an unexpected difficulty arose; for when we told him that we wished to ascend the mountain by daybreak on the following morning under his guidance. "Impossible! it is Sunday, and I cannot leave home without hearing mass," he answered.

"It would not look well, when so many people are present, for me to set a bad example," he whispered to us.

"I must take care of my precious soul above all things: it behoves us all to do so," he added aloud.

Here was a dilemma for us: we had no argument to offer against so pious a resolve; and we understood that he must descend to St. Romão, and return, before he could accompany us; when at that moment a respectable-looking personage, in the dress of a priest, stepped foward, and said that he should be happy to perform mass in the chapel at daybreak, if it would accommodate us, instead of a later hour, as he had purposed.

"The gentlemen will pay you," put in Josè, with his usual impudence, which he was, I must say, always ready to exercise in our service.

"I require no payment for doing my duty," answered the priest, whom we found to be the prior's curate.

Thus the matter being settled to Anselmo's satisfaction, he forthwith set about preparing our room, first sending his son and another boy down the mountain to purchase bread, wine, and meat, for our sustenance. He and his wife brought in plates, knives, cups, mattrasses, and blankets, making our beds on the floor, on each side of the little room: our own sheets sewn into sacks we had with us, and we found them most serviceable, though our host could have provided us with those also.

Our hunger would not allow us to wait for the return of our carriers from St. Romão, so we supped off hard eggs and coarse rye-bread, washed down with our most serviceable tea. At last the boys returned, with a large skin of wine, an abundance of excellent

white bread, and several chickens, laughing heartily at the quantity of food the strangers intended to consume. At all events, we had no fear of starving on the morrow's excursion; Senhora Anselmo undertaking to cook the chickens, and her husband to carry them and the wine up the mountain.

A rugged and steep bridle-path traverses part of the mountain, to be passed only in safety by mules; and as we wished to save our horses, and could hire no other beasts, we determined, by Anselmo's advice, to proceed on foot; a task I should advise no one to attempt who is not very confident in his strength and nerves.

So rugged and wild is the Serra d'Estrella, that there are no paths by which an army, or scarcely a single horseman, could pass over it from the spot where we now were, even reaching to Coimbra. A feat was performed a few months ago by a squadron of cavalry under the command of a ministerial officer, which was looked upon as extraordinary. He had been stationed at Cea, and being ordered to proceed to Lisbon, wished to avoid meeting Bom Fim, who with the revolted regiments was marching towards Almeida. Finding a guide, he therefore conducted his men across the serra, where horses had never before trod, the men being obliged to dismount, and to lead their steeds by the bridle, near the edge of precipices which it made them giddy even to look down.

I have seen many frightful places which the Portuguese cavalry must constantly pass, so I can judge

of the difficulty of this; but necessity will make men dare what at other times they would think practically impossible.

During the Peninsular war several British regiments, both cavalry and Highlanders were quartered at St. Romão, a strong position in itself; if threatened by an overwhelming force they could always retreat up the mountain, which they could defend against any numbers. From them Anselmo had picked up a considerable stock of English expressions, not of the choicest, it may be supposed, and he soon began to exhibit his knowledge to us, at first much to our astonishment, before we learned where he had gained his education. His knowledge of French phraseology was about as extensive, and equally choice; indeed, from the anecdotes he told relating to both parties, I suspect that however exemplary he may now be in his spiritual exercises, he was not equally so in his youth.

Several of the other rooms were occupied by pilgrims; the priest and his family (I know not what connexions the ladies were) being a few doors off; and he paid us a visit to request us to lend him our tea-pot, which we gladly did, the only return we made him for his civility. I am afraid he did not quite approve of Anselmo's conversation, who at last took his leave, locking us all up together. We were obliged to go to bed, for our lamp did not afford us light sufficient to read or write. It consisted of a thin cotton wick, hanging out at the lip of a small tin saucer, with a handle by which it was suspended

against the wall. This sort of lamp we found general in all the small inns both of Spain and Portugal. Scarcely was my head on my pillow before I beheld a whole squadron of fleas advancing up it. I rose to put them to flight—in vain—so I threw open the shutter of our unglazed window, and stood enjoying the cool mountain-air, gazing at the bright stars, and listening to the murmuring, rushing sound of the torrent, which flowed before me beneath the tall arch of the bridge. At last, feeling the balmy soother stealing over my senses, I got into my bag, drawing it closely round my neck, and left my face exposed to the attacks of my foes—though fortunately for me, so somniferous was the murmur of the stream, that I felt not the inroads which the Hun-like hordes of barbarians made upon my frame, but was soon, like my more happy companion, wrapt in sleep.

The voice of Anselmo, who knocked at the door, with a lamp in his hand, roused us from our slumbers; and while he went to prepare the chapel, and to hear mass, we boiled and drank our coffee, and ate some dry bread, the only food we wisely took. It was a pretty sight in the grey light of the early morn to see the pilgrim peasants and shepherds, in their dark Saragossa dresses, assembling round the door of the little chapel before us—not so to behold one wretch working his way round and round the building upon his knees, a victim to absurd superstition and gross ignorance. At the same time numerous large flocks of goats and sheep were passing, under convoy of men and dogs, to seek their well-known pastures on the moun-

tain's side. At last mass being concluded, Anselmo appeared with some iron-pointed sticks for our use, a leathern bottle to hold the wine, and a bag for the bread and chickens, both of which he strapped on to his back. I carried a sketch-book, as did L——, a brandy-flask, a leathern cup, and a *quaigh*, of the possession of which I have previously made mention. Thus equipped, directly on leaving the house we started boldly up the steep face of the mountain, at a pace which Anselmo did not much approve of.

"*Espera num pouco, Senhores*—Your youthful spirits will soon be tamed," he cried. "I much doubt if you will be able to return at that pace, if at all."

"We are but essaying our strength, good friend," we answered laughing, exhilarated by the fresh, buoyant air of the morning. "Wait till we are warm, and then we will convince you we are no despicable mountaineers."

I must not forget to mention a fourth personage of the party—a magnificent dog, as large as a wolf, with long shaggy hair, Malhado by name, who led the way, barking and whining with delight. All the shepherds and goatherds of the mountain possess these dogs to guard their sheep and goats; but they say that three are not more than a match for a wolf, nor will they in general face one; their chief service being to give notice of the enemy's approach, and to drive the sheep out of his way. They are treated however as horses are, to keep them from roaming, their courage probably being tamed thereby.

In these mountainous regions there are many

wolves, as there are in all the uncultivated parts of Portugal; but they seldom descend to attack the flocks in the plains, except when driven by an excess of cold from their more elevated domains; they then become dangerous even for unarmed men to encounter. The shepherds at all times keep watch over their flocks with guns in their hands to destroy the marauders.

On, on, we climbed up the rugged height, leaving the torrent of the Alva to our left, and soon ascending far above the glen, we enjoyed an almost boundless prospect across the north and east of Portugal, towards Almeida even to the wide extending plains of Leon, in which Ciudad Rodrigo is situated, whither I was about in a few days to wend my way. Even here the industrious hand of man had not been idle, and in a few of the more level spots the ground had been turned up to be sown with rye or oats, and also, if I recollect rightly, with potatoes. After two hours' unremitting exertion, descending a few feet, we reached the borders of a small lake, surrounded by rocks: those on the mountain-side were lofty and precipitous, and on the side of the plain low and rounded. It was fringed with a carpet of soft green turf, over which, in the rainy season, the waters probably flow. Anselmo gave it the name of the *Lagoa Rodonda*, or Round Lake. Skirting it, we climbed up through an opening in the opposite cliff, where we sat down by the side of a streamlet; our guide to satisfy his hunger, and I to take a sketch of the view; the Serra de Marão, in the province

of the Traz os Montes, and which is inferior only to the Serra d'Estrella of all the mountains of Portugal, being seen in the far distance. Again we proceeded up the rocky heights, among numerous bright streams gushing from the ground, or small clear pools fed by them; the juniper-bushes which aided us in our ascent growing in great profusion on every side. From among them we started in our course many coveys of partridges, L—— regretting every instant that he had not his gun to bring some of them down. Here and there were black patches, where the charcoal-makers had been at work, burning the hard twisting stem and root of a shrub similar in size and appearance to the juniper, but the name of which I forget.

On the summit of each of the largest of the rounded rocks, rising from the mountain, within sight of each other, were piled heaps of stones to mark the path across it, which we now regained, for we had made a considerable *détour* to visit the Round Lake. We here encountered a goatherd, whose dogs, till he called them off, came bounding and barking shrilly towards us. He was habited in a sheep-skin jacket, with leggins of long hairy goat-skin, a thick brown cloak was flung over one shoulder; while he leaned on a long rusty-looking fowling-piece. He being an acquaintance of Anselmo's we stopped to talk, giving him a quaigh full of brandy from our flask. He could not understand what could possibly induce strangers to visit that dreary region, and assured us there was nothing worth seeing.

"Ah! my friend," observed Anselmo, "we all

admire what we are not accustomed to: when you go into a city you think all you see wonderful; now these gentlemen, who are accustomed to cities, admire our mountain-scenery—there is the difference." I give exactly our guide's words. Our goatherd friend shrugged his shoulders, and he wishing us a successful termination to our day's adventure, we put our shoulders up the ascent. We passed several other goatherds at a distance, most picturesque figures, posted on some high rock, either leaning on their guns, or reclining at their length looking over the edge of the cliffs, whence they could command a view of their flocks feeding in the grassy hollows. After walking about four hours, we reached a region destitute of shrubs of any sort, covered only with short grass, between the storm-worn rocks—and then descending, we crossed a circular spot surrounded by rocks, evidently at one time the bason of a lake, the ground being scattered over with immense slabs of stone; we had no doubt washed into their present shape by the action of water. I remarked in this dry lake several most peculiarly shaped rocks, in the form of large sarcophagi, like Egyptian tombs, one of the same shape rising also from the water near the edge of the dark lake we afterwards visited. Nothing could be more wild or desolate than the aspect of the region we traversed for another hour: huge dark rocks rising on every side, or large slabs of stone strewing the ground, with scarce a blade of grass between them.

At last we reached the eastern edge of the mountain near the summit, when a superb prospect broke

upon our sight. Below us, was a steep and rugged precipice, with a glen so deep that the eye could not pierce its profound hollows; to our right, rose a lofty and broken cliff destitute of any verdure, now cast into the darkest shade, and which echoed back the sound of our voices; while to the left, and in front, appeared rocky mounds piled one above each other in the wildest confusion. Beyond all, over a succession of mountain-ranges, were seen the blue sierras of Spain, the nearer ones rising bold and distinct against the sky, the more distant lost in a light glistering haze. On a ledge, at some distance beneath our feet was a small clear pool, reflecting the intense blue of the sky, the streamlet which flowed from it trickling and sparkling down the moss-covered rocks *.

"What do you think of that, Senhores?" exclaimed our guide exultingly. "I told you I should shew you some fine views; but I have others still finer in store for you. The world cannot shew their like."

Anselmo was as good as his word, for making several wide *détours*, to avoid the deep gloomy ravines which cut far into the side of the mountain, we passed many other points, whence the prospects were wild and grand as the above, and which, though different, would in a verbal description appear much alike. At last, after springing from slab to slab of the rough granite, steadying ourselves with our iron-pointed sticks, we stood upon a ledge on the edge of another precipice.

* See Sketch of "Os Cantaros," p. 72.

"There!" again cried Anselmo. "Does any other mountain in the world possess a brother to that rock? How came it there, I should like to know. Solve me that question, and I shall say you are wise gentlemen." He pointed to a vast barren rock before us, which rose to a perpendicular height of several hundred feet directly out of the side of the mountain, broken and rugged, and gradually decreasing in size towards the top, which was of sufficient extent to allow several men to stand there, if they could once have climbed to it. To our right was another perpendicular cliff, below which a ravine sloped far away downwards till lost in distance. In the intervening space beyond us were the same ranges of mountains, reaching to Spain, as before described, and about us huge slabs, and piles of rocks, rounded probably from the rush of waters flowing from the melting snows.

"That rock, Senhor, is called the *Cantaro Magro*," (*the thin water-jar*,) said Anselmo—not a bad name, I must observe, for it much resembles in shape the pitchers the women carry on their heads. "Down that ravine is the only pathway on this side of the mountain leading to Covelinhas," he continued. "I have a friend in that village who will give us every accommodation; and if the Senhores would like, we will spend the night there, and see the remainder of the mountain to-morrow."

We did not think fit to accept Anselmo's proposal, for which I am now sorry, as I suspect we should have enjoyed some fine scenery in descending the glen,

and have been able to examine the mountain more at our leisure the following day, which proved an equally fine one.

A sensation of hunger, approaching to the ravenous, reminded us that we were mortals, and had passed upwards of five hours in the most violent exercise since we left the hospice. I therefore called a halt, and, sheltered from the cold wind by a rock, we spread our frugal fare on a flat stone, not forgeting the skin-bottle of wine, and seated ourselves round it, with the vast Cantaro Magro rising directly before us. While I munched the tough fowl, of which the dog Malhado, who sat with most dignified composure at the table, came in for a good share, I sketched the wild scene, quaffing at intervals from the wine-skin, which, under our united efforts, shrunk into the thinnest proportions. Anselmo at last rolled it up, and sighing deeply, convinced us it contained no more of the generous fluid.

I shall not quickly forget that mountain-prospect. I threw myself back, enjoying the genial warmth of the sun, and the fragrance of my cigar: a blue vapour, or it might have been the smoke from some cottage-hearth, arose in wreaths from the glen, far, far below us, while a solemn silence reigned around; the tinkling sound of the goat-bells and the bleating of sheep, ascending from a distance, struck faintly on our ears. High above us a hawk was wheeling in the pure æther pursued by a flock of small birds, joined in an alliance to destroy their common foe, who, apparently discomfited, was endeavouring to escape their persevering

attacks; a good lesson to all proud and cruel tyrants of the fate they may be doomed to suffer from the hands of the once abject subjects of their will.

While thus moralizing, smoking, finishing my sketch, and enjoying the view, Anselmo, who had gathered up the fragments of the feast, urged us to proceed. "*Vamos Senhores*, we have yet a long way to go before reaching the summit, and then many a rugged league to traverse in order to visit the lakes on our return," he cried.

Obeying him, we once more turned our faces up the mountain, but after passing some grassy hollows, whence the bright water trickled forth, forming the source of the Mondego, the ascent was easy, and in less than an hour we reached the most lofty spot of ground in Portugal. It is a circular level space, about half a mile in circumference, marked by a high obelisk, erected at the command of that pious monarch Don John the Fifth.

Proceeding beyond the obelisk, we stood upon an overhanging rock, whence we commanded a prospect towards the south of an extent of country bounded only by our power of vision, and reaching over a vast succession of hilly ranges to the latitude of Lisbon.

Few spots can command more extensive views than the Serra d'Estrella; for although the altitude is not very great, it is by far the highest of all the neighbouring ranges; and the atmosphere being clear, there is nothing from that cause to obstruct the sight. I made a sketch from near the obelisk, but which, of course, can give but a very inadequate idea of the

magnificence of the scenery. A mountain-eagle was floating majestically above us at the time, apparently gazing down with supreme contempt upon our puny efforts, which, after all our labour, could carry us to no higher an elevation than the one we had gained.

Three streams take their rise from the ground we occupied. The Mondego flows forth on the east side, and then makes a broad sweep towards the north and west; the other two are the Alva on the west, and the Zezere on the south, neither of which are navigable.

I was most unwilling to leave our commanding position; but the danger of being benighted urged us to return; for though we could not have been favoured by a more propitious day, it was impossible to calculate the changes a few hours might work. As we descended at our utmost speed, over the short smooth grass and flattened rocks, we found the heat excessive; not a breath of wind stirring the air. We were compelled therefore constantly to stop, and quench our thirst at the deliciously cool springs abounding on our way. Anselmo with unerring accuracy led us to those he pronounced the purest, where the shepherds had formed small basons of stones, for the greater convenience of drinking.

When the sun is obscured it would be almost impossible for a stranger to find his way across the mountain; and some who have imprudently ventured alone have lost their lives, either frozen and starved to death, or have fallen over the precipices abounding on every side. Till the month of June the whole

summit of the mountain is covered with snow—in some of the hollows twenty feet deep, into which the incautious passenger may be without warning plunged. August is by far the best month to explore these regions, when storms are of rare occurrence; for even on the week before we were there, Anselmo told us he had been overtaken, without any previous warning, by a violent storm of lightning, hail, and rain, and had been compelled to seek shelter for hours beneath an overhanging rock. In the summer the shepherds pass several nights together on the mountain, building up walls below some lofty rock, and lighting a fire in front of their rude hut, where by turns they take their rest. To examine the mountain thoroughly, a visiter must do the same, for even on horseback many hours must be occupied in ascending. This can be easily accomplished, without risk, by employing a mule to carry blankets and provisions to a sheltered spot, where one might most luxuriously bivouac, having a good guide, with dogs and guns to keep the wolves at a distance. I believe one would be fully repaid by exploring the many interesting and secluded spots to be found, not to speak of the gratification of gazing on the bright stars in the dark blue sky, and seeing the rugged rocks, scattered in wild confusion around, lighted up by the red glare of the fire, and reflected in the dark waters of some tranquil pool. I think of making the expedition at a future period, with a light boat of skins to sound the depth of the dark lake, said to be fathomless. Some French officers, stationed at St.

Romão during the Peninsular war, carried a small wooden boat up to the lake, but the length of their line was insufficient to reach the bottom. The country people believe that this lake is fed by no streams, has no outlet, and that it therefore must be connected with the sea; producing, as a proof of their theory, an account of a wreck having been found on its shores. They had entirely forgotten the boat of the French officers, which has been exaggerated into a vessel of much greater magnitude.

Towards this mysterious pool we now bent our steps, across a most dreary region of dry lakes and barren rocks, endeavouring to make a short cut to reach it. But even Anselmo could be mistaken in his way; for unexpected obstacles rose in our path. Sometimes we found ourselves on the summit of a rugged precipice which it was necessary to descend; then we had to make a circuit to avoid a stream, and its neighbouring swamp; now we found ourselves at the bottom of a deep glen, like the Valley of Diamonds described by Sinbad, without any visible outlet, and were obliged to climb the wild crags with no little difficulty and labour to make our escape. Anselmo was certainly for a time at fault, but his sagacity we found was not to be baffled: again mounting another height, he distinguished in the far distance some well-known landmarks.

"There lies our course," he cried: "rather a rough one; but you, Senhores, are good mountaineers—so *vamos*." On we went, now descending crags some hundred feet or nearly in height, leaping

from rock to rock, and ledge to ledge; my companion, unaccustomed to such work, not at all admiring it. Once my foot slipped, and I fell headlong—but fortunately on to a soft green ledge of turf, looking at which had made me careless. Even Malhado hesitated once or twice to climb along a narrow slippery ledge, which we had passed, by holding to the rock above, and now and then he nearly threw us over the cliffs as he bounded past to overtake his master. We had however no choice but to proceed—we had got into the rocky labyrinth, and it was equally difficult to return as to go forward. Anselmo proved himself to be a good cragsman, with a firm foot leading the way: for myself I was in high spirits, and was ready to encounter a much more hazardous undertaking.

At last we mounted another lofty cliff—"There, Senhores, there are the lakes!" exclaimed Anselmo, and we beheld directly below us, completely encircled by rocks, on our side of considerable height, and perpendicular; on the opposite, broken, and lower, a round well-like bason of water, of the darkest hue, and beyond in a green valley, a long lake stretching in a silvery line, with two dark spots in it towards the west. As to the size of the dark lake, there are many opinions, for no one has measured it, I believe. My friend Mr. Whiteley, who bathed in it, considers it upwards of two miles in circumference, while I calculated that it is within half a mile round, the high rocks encircling it much deceiving the vision. To descend to its shores was our most difficult task,

for we now stood on the summit of its highest cliffs; but by going to the right, we discovered a break in the rock, and by sliding, and leaping, and climbing, as if going down a ladder, we at last reached the piles of huge stones, interspersed with a variety of low shrubs, which form its northern edge. I was too much fatigued to venture into the water, though it appeared that I could have swam across it. I sat down, and made a sketch of this most uncommonly wild and secluded spot. I have never seen or heard described any other at all similar to it. Here we were but a short distance from the level of the summit of the mountain, and several thousand feet above the ocean, yet apparently at the bottom of some deep glen. Not a sound was heard, not a bird was seen among the wild cliffs, not a fish leaped from the dark mysterious depths, not an insect skimmed over the glass-like surface of the lake. It was a spot suited for some black incantation, the scene of a fairy-tale, full of horrors and wonders. What might not indeed that dark pool conceal within its unexplored recesses—the habitation, perchance, of some vast and solitary monster, who may issue forth during the fierce storms of night, to prey upon the unguarded sheep, or perhaps to carry off the helpless and affrighted shepherds!

Not far from where I stood arose from out of the water a black rock, shaped like the lid of a sarcophagus. From its tomb-like form the idea was suggested that, holding the remains of some warrior-chief, or early Gothic monarch, it had here been placed, that the deep

waters might preserve it from the profane touch of the heedless wanderer to these unfrequented regions.

In truth, this mountain-lake is very curious, and well worthy of a visit. With regard to its not being fed by any streams, that is an absurdity. We in our course down to it passed several rivulets, carrying a volume sufficient abundantly to supply both it and the long lake, and which, though they do not fall over the cliffs, make their way through some hidden channels beneath them; the superabundant water finding an outlet evidently below the huge piles of rocks from which I took my sketch. At first, from its peculiar shape, I fancied that it might be the crater of some extinct volcano, the rocks rising in a cone-like form, let it be understood, around it; but on examination, we could discover no marks of volcanic agency, nor have others who have visited the spot; so that at last we came to the conclusion, that the rocks were thrown into their present peculiar form by chance (if we may use such a term for any terrestrial occurrence) at the mighty general commotion of the globe, which has covered this world we inhabit with so many picturesque beauties—or else—we were obliged to acknowledge we knew nothing at all about the matter.

Anselmo pointing to the sun, now rapidly sinking towards the horizon, summoned us—most unwilling I was—to depart. Climbing down the lower outside rocky circle of the lake we crossed a stream at the head of the Lagoa Comprida, the Long Lake, which may be a mile in length, though I would rather say half a mile, and then ascended the opposite bank.

We neither of us had ever before suffered so much from thirst as we did that day; for though continually drinking from the sparkling streams in our way, no quantity of water would keep moist our parched mouths. Dreary and wild was indeed the scenery we again passed, and well may those about to venture across that barren region first petition for protection from Our Lady of the Desert. For a minute we threw ourselves down on a rock to rest, but the time of daylight was precious; for to descend in the dark would have been a work of much danger, if not almost impossible. How gladly did we once more welcome the sight of the inhabited world below us, bathed in the glowing radiance of the evening sun! but we had yet many a rugged mile to traverse, by the edge of yawning chasms, and down slippery cliffs, before we could hope to reach it.

"Oh for the red flesh of a juicy water-melon to cool our parched throats!" I exclaimed, after walking a league further, when at that very instant we descried two figures before us descending the mountain.

"Those are women with baskets on their heads, and are very probably carrying fruit from Covelinhas to St. Romão," said Anselmo.

"Grant that your conjectures are right!" we heartily responded, shouting at the top of our voices; but the sound reached them not. Onward we dashed to overtake them, but the women seemed frightened at our gestures, and quickened their pace.

"Beckon to them, Senhores, when they make the next turn," shouted Anselmo. "For those are *Monta-*

neiras, and will lead you a long chace, if you do not make them throw down their burdens, and fly off in terror."

We thereon pulled up, and, greatly to our satisfaction, saw the women soon after stop, and place their baskets on a rock. Never did thirsty travellers on Arabia's arid deserts rush with more eager haste towards a green oasis, than did we towards the tempting baskets; nor were we doomed, as they so often are, to be disappointed by a phantom-pool; for, plunging our hands into the nearest, after a word of explanation, we drew them forth full of the most delicious figs, which we greedily devoured. The other girl, who appeared to be the mistress of her who carried the largest basket, pitying our condition, yet laughing at our eagerness, then produced several large cool and ripe pears, seeming surprised at the amount of the silver coin we gladly presented in return. Anselmo, too, was not a little glad to join us in our repast, and eating as we proceeded with renewed strength, we descended the mountain in company with the beneficent angels who had thus timely appeared to succour us. We were almost put to shame by the firmness and security with which the girls kept pace with us, again taking off their shoes, which they had resumed on our approach.

The mistress told us she had been to spend a few days with a married sister at Covelinhas, and returning to her home, was bringing a few things which were cheaper in the former village. Stopping at a fountain I offered her my cup, but nothing would persuade her

to drink till we had quenched our thirst, and then she preferred the more primitive method of taking a draught by stooping on her knees to reach the silvery jet of water.

We agreed it was far more painful to descend among the rocks and over rolling stones, than to climb the steep; particularly when the dusk of evening prevented us from clearly distinguishing the narrow winding path; but at last, Malhado taking two or three bounds forward with joy at reaching his home, we found ourselves close to the welcome hospice. There arrived, Anselmo acknowledged he was fairly tired out, and never did we enjoy chicken-broth more than that we found boiling on the fire in readiness for us, under the superintendence of his tender helpmate. She also, of her own accord, brought us hot water to bathe our feet; a luxury we should not have dreamed of expecting. After taking an exhilarating cup of tea, we agreed that we should be prepared, with a few hours sleep, to go through the same exertion on the morrow. Our heads once on our pillows, not a minute had elapsed before oblivion stole over our souls.

I must not omit to recommend Anselmo as the best guide over the mountain; indeed, on no excursion have I ever found a more intelligent and willing person. I counselled him to break in his son, a quick active boy, for the same purpose; but years of experience must be required, not only to thread the rocky mazes with security, but to learn the signs of coming storms, and to know where to fly for shelter from their fury.

In concluding this Sketch, I must again repeat my advice to the tourist,—Let no one attempt performing the ascent on foot, unless they have full confidence in their own strength and nerve; at the same time it must be remembered, that by following the bridle-path some of the finest views are lost, and a longer time is occupied. The best plan is to hire some small mules at St. Romão, with one or more extra men to attend on them, and then to make *détours* on foot with Anselmo; recollecting to start from the hospice at the earliest dawn, or even before it, the stars giving a mule sufficient light to perform the first part of the way without danger. The saddle-bags should be well supplied with wine and meat, and let the beasts carry a feed of corn for themselves; then, I doubt not, if the day prove fine, the traveller in search of the picturesque will thank me for my advice.

SKETCH XXII.

The Prior of St. Romao on his way to the fair of Viseu to amuse himself

Leaving St. Romão on the Road to Viseu, we pass through the Villages of Folgoza and Figueredo. Scene in a Pine-grove. The Prior of St. Romão—a character. Mineral Springs. Arrive at Viseu. Geographical position of the City. The Streets dirty and narrow. The Cathedral. Church of St. Michael: Tomb of Don Roderick, the last of the Goths. The Fair of Viseu. Commodities for Sale. The College. Hospital: extensive View from the Roof. Philanthropic Character of the Portuguese. Site of a Roman Encampment. Having paid our respects to the Lions of the place, retire to rest.

NOTWITHSTANDING the slight fatigue we felt at night, we were rather unwilling to rise from our humble couches, when, by dawn on the morrow, Anselmo, followed by Malhado, came to wish us farewell, he being bound to some distant village. He appeared perfectly contented with about the value of fifteen shillings, which we gave him for his guidance, his chickens, the

loan of his beds, and his wife's assistance, draining the last of our jar of wine to our healths, and sporting some of his choicest English.

After breakfast we sauntered about for some time, unwilling to commence the jog-trot to which we were doomed for the rest of the day, I taking during the time a sketch of the bridge, with our hospice on the left, and the chapel on the opposite side. We then, wishing farewell to Senhora Anselmo, as crossing the bridge we passed her cottage, ascended a short way, where we again reined in our steeds to enjoy the view near one of the little chapels by the road-side. After drinking in the beauties of the scene, we wound our way down the mountain.

Leaving St. Romão, and descending yet some way further to the very base of the mountain, we passed through the villages of Folgoza and Figueredo, situated among pine-groves on slight elevations, the scenery being uninteresting, except when looking back upon the mountain we had quitted. Indeed, during the whole day's journey we passed no views worthy of description.

At a short distance from a considerable village called St. Sofia we encountered long lines of peasantry, the women in dresses of the gayest colours; the blue in particular being of the brightest cerulean hue —some on donkeys, others on foot, dancing, playing, and singing, as they proceeded on their way from a grand *Romaria*, or festival, held in that place. Many of the young girls were playing in front of their party on large square tambourines, to the music of which

their feet kept time; the men's instruments were pipes, violins, and guitars. Outside the village was a large fruit-garden, with a pretty aqueduct leading to it, to which the water was raised by means of a huge wheel placed under a tastefully-built shed, the whole wearing an air of neatness seldom seen in Portugal. The village was crowded with people, sitting on the steps of the cottage-doors, and in every spot where shade was to be found; the men invariably rising and taking off their hats as we passed, and the women returning our salutes with a "*Viva, Senhor!*" We here witnessed a scene rather unusual in this country—a man helplessly tipsy, supported on the ground, his head in a woman's lap, and a party of young girls with the most perfect unconcern dancing round him. Among so many people we saw none who were not neatly and cleanly dressed, nor were we once asked for alms.

Passing some vineyards, we picked a few bunches of grapes to cool our mouths, in spite of Josè's warning, who declared that the people in the neighbourhood were bad characters, and would shoot us without ceremony. It is a fact, that the farmers are very tenacious respecting their grapes, naturally so from the difficulty of guarding them—"Come and dine with me, but do not steal my grapes," is a proverb. We discovered before this that Josè knew no more of the road than did we, and was therefore very anxious to join the company of any respectable-looking people we passed on their way to the fair of Viseu. With two such, shopkeepers from St. Romão, we went a short distance. We crossed the Mondego by the Ponte

Nova, a well-built, handsome bridge, the water shallow and dirty, and then ascended a steep pine-covered hill, where we lost sight of the travellers; Josè declaring all the time that he was anxious to keep in some one's society for fear of being attacked by robbers.

In the middle of a pine-grove we found a bustling scene being acted; a sort of rural venda having been erected for the convenience of passengers going to the fair. Beneath the shade of the trees were two or three booths with tables in front of them, and stoves by their sides, on which fish was frying and soup was boiling, a number of people standing round ready to partake of the repast, while their horses or mules were picqueted near, munching the green tops of the Indian corn supplied by several ragged little urchins, who ran about with bundles of the tempting-looking provender under their arms. Whether one of them held some of it near the nose of my companion's horse, I know not, but neither whip nor spur would induce him to pass the spot; he nearly upsetting a table by persisting in his determination. At last Josè coming up begged us to bait here; so dismounting we saw our beasts supplied with milho-tops, and we ourselves endeavoured in vain to eat of a too savoury mess prepared by a buxom damsel, the keeper of one of the booths. While we were standing calculating the strength of our digestive organs, we observed a stout old gentleman pouring a glass of spirits down the back of one of our St. Romão acquaintance, and consequently immediately pronounced him to be a travelling quack-doctor on his way to

the fair. We soon, however, found how completely we were mistaken, when one of the party, politely giving us an invitation, which we gladly accepted, to join a repast spread out upon the grass, introduced the latter as the reverend prior of St. Romão. I never made a better meal off cold partridge and the purest wheaten bread; but the prior, saying he could shew something superior to it, produced from his saddle-bags a loaf of broa-bread of the Indian corn, which was in truth the most delicious I ever tasted. It was of a delicate yellow colour, very light, sweet as new corn, and of a cake-like consistency. I pronounce the broa of St. Romão the best bread in Portugal.

On the good prior's countenance played a benign smile, and we found him also a man of the world, for he could both give a joke and take a joke, as he shewed when the brazen-faced damsel of the booth, who brought us our wine, smoothed down his well-filled out waistcoat with some not over-delicate expressions, and then attempted to bestow a kiss on his reverend cheeks. His facetious expression of resignation to his fate was very good, till her addresses became rather too familiar, when he endeavoured to keep her at bay with his stout stick.

"Begone, witch of Satan!" he cried, half angrily. "How dare you thus in open day shew your shame-facedness?"

"Oh, oh" cried the girl, laughing. "Come, don't be angry, Senhor Padre, but give me a kiss."

"Kiss you! you impudent ——. Begone, I say," answered the prior.

"That is good indeed!" laughed his tormentress. "Kiss me! Why not? I should think I am not the only pretty girl you have kissed in your life."

The prior shrugged his shoulders with a smile, for he felt himself no match for the girl, and she, thinking she had gone far enough, turned to try the effect of her blandishments on some more susceptible personage.

We now again mounted our respective animals; that of the prior deserving a particular notice, as indeed does his whole travelling equipage. I conceived a great esteem for the old man, and determined therefore to accompany him on his way. His steed was of an advanced age, and steady demeanour, of a black hue, with the most remarkable short legs and long body I ever saw possessed by a horse, something like a turnspit, yet he contrived to jog on, notwithstanding the great weight of his master, at as fast a rate as could our horses, without once making a false step. The prior himself is not less worthy of description. He was, as I have said, of large proportions: he had numbered, as he told us, sixty-five summers, yet bore them lightly, for his cheeks, well filled, were tinted of a healthy colour, and his eye was bright. On his head he wore a very broad-brimmed, low-crowned hat, covered with oilskin, his large black coat and waistcoat were unbuttoned, his nether man was clothed in knee-breeches and high black boots with immense spurs, while at his saddle-bow was suspended in a case a large red cotton umbrella, and behind, over his crupper, was hung a vast pair of saddle-bags. An

attendant followed on a donkey, perched on the top of a cargo, with his feet on the animal's neck.

On we jogged for many a mile, holding much conversation. He told us that he was formerly a friar of the order of the Barefooted Carmelites, the same as our friend of Busaco; that he had travelled to every part of Portugal, and visited Spain on foot; that he had conversed with people of all nations, of all religions, and of all opinions; indeed, that he could not accuse himself of being a prejudiced man. He complained much of the seclusion in which he was doomed to live, apart from any educated people with whom he could exchange ideas; one of the nearest being the Visconde de Mollelos, who occasionally visited him; and he concluded that now, finding a change was necessary for his health, he was going to the fair of Viseu to amuse himself.

As we rode along, L—— made an admirable sketch of him, which is placed at the head of this section.

The shopkeepers of St. Romão had fallen behind, and we, fancying the prior knew the road, as he, it appeared, thought our arrieiro did, lost our way, making a circuit of upwards of a league, when our old friend confessed that it was nearly forty years since he had gone that road. Not liking to quit him, we kept by his side, and when in a thick pine-grove we managed to miss both our arrieiro and his servant; the sun now getting very low. We hallooed, but no answer was returned; so we had nothing to do but to ride on.

"We have some chance of spending the night in this wood, Senhor Prior," I could not help saying.

"Fear not, my friends," he answered. "I think I recollect certain marks hereabouts, a place I once knew so well."

He was right, and dismounting where a broad gravel-road appeared, he said he would there wait to direct the servants; pointing us out the direction we were to take. The path however was not so easy to find, till we engaged a simple shepherd-boy to shew us the way to a village called Banios, some distance below us, where a bridge crosses the stream. We asked the boy how far it was on to Viseu, but he knew not, for he had never crossed the bridge in his life: a strange absence of the wandering propensity!

We bade farewell to the good old prior, promising if we ever returned to St. Romão, to pay him a visit, and taste his broa.

It was nearly dusk as we rode down a steep newly-made road to the bridge, and when there we sat down on a bench before a small venda to wait for Josè. We were surprised to see several well-dressed ladies and gentlemen walking about, till we learned that there are mineral springs here, esteemed of great virtue, like those of Vizella, and that they are in much request. Some, I believe, rise boiling from the centre of the river. Having arrived at that late hour we could not examine them. A man belonging to the venda, who by his pronunciation we found was not a native, told us that he was a German, and came to Portugal with the French army, from whom he deserted, and married a Portuguese girl, only eighteen years of age, who had accompanied him to

Russia and Italy. She was now standing by his side, an ugly old woman.

While he was speaking a tall man rode up on a fine mule, habited like a Portuguese, but who addressed us in good English, with a slight accent, which shewed that he also was a German, probably a director of some of the many mines working in the country. There are a great number of Germans scattered about Portugal, and, as everywhere else, they are always the most industrious and intelligent of the strangers.

At last Josè appeared with a boy, whom the good prior had sent forward to act as our guide to Viseu, about a league distant. There was no inn at the baths. On therefore we went for the greater part of the distance up hills and through pine-groves, where our guide had some difficulty in finding his way in the dark; Josè all the time expressing his full expectation of being robbed and murdered.

The air was cool, and refreshing, after the heat of the day; a thin crescent-moon and the bright stars shedding a pale light over the prospect, so that we much enjoyed our ride, though not sorry to find ourselves in the narrow streets of Viseu.

The first inn we stopped at could afford us no accommodation, so we rode on to one kept by a Spaniard, where we found that some English friends, who had made part of our tour, had arrived the previous day. They were at the theatre, where the governor of the province was present, who gave *vivas* for the Constitution; a method often employed by the

heads of parties to calculate the number of their supporters, and thus judge the pulse of the people by the loudness of their echoing cries.

Our friends soon returned, when, seated round the supper-table, we mutually recounted our adventures. Nothing is more pleasant than thus meeting friends in a foreign land, when both have been wandering through strange scenes, and encountering a variety of persons and adventures.

Tuesday the 17th was an excessively hot day; and if one may judge by comparing the temperature we experienced at Viseu with that of the places we had visited since leaving Oporto, I should pronounce it, during the summer-months, to be a very broiling city. The ranges of the Busaco and Caramula mountains completely shut out the sea-breeze, while a level country between it and the heated plains of Spain, allow the hot sirocco to reach it with full force, and untempered warmth; it being at the same time too far from the Serra d'Estrella and Marão to benefit by the refreshing blasts from off their cloud-capped heights.

Viseu is situated on a slightly elevated ground, nearly midway between the two mountains, and in the centre of the plains of the Beira Alta. I must again warn my readers, that when I speak of a plain in Portugal, I do not mean a country level as a bowling-green, but merely that it is an open space, not intersected by any very lofty or impassable serras.

This city is one of the most ancient in Portugal, the scene of many fierce contests between the Moors

and Christians, and contains many Gothic and Moorish remains. The Romans also established close to it a camp of considerable dimensions, probably from finding it the best situation for collecting food for a large army in the surrounding country, as did the British further to the east, near Almeida, during the Peninsular war. The streets are narrow, crooked, ill-paved, and cannot boast of much cleanliness; the houses are in general small, ill-constructed, and have a most dilapidated appearance: indeed, Viseu is an ancient Portuguese city, with few improvements for some past centuries. Having said thus much, I will give an account of our rambles therein.

Our first visit was to the sè, Viseu being one of the most ancient sees in Portugal. The exterior is of the style of architecture that Murphy describes as between the Teutonic and Tuscan, and which is my utter aversion. The interior as a whole is handsome.

The roof is finely groined, of a plain dark stone, the knots, where rosettes are often placed, particularly well carved. The supporting pillars are massive, and would look well, but that they are, as is part of the wall, disfigured with whitewash: the rest is covered with blue tiles. The canopy over the high altar is supported by elegant gilt columns, the roof being painted in arabesque. The organ-loft is of chestnut-wood, most richly carved, both the organ, the pulpits, the stalls, the roof, and the altars, being but slightly gilt; exhibiting a far better taste than that which usually overloads those parts of the sacred edifices

with gold leaf. Altogether, the cathedral of Viseu may be pronounced worthy of admiration.

The sacristy, a plain square hall, contains some pictures much superior to those generally seen in the churches in Portugal. The Austrian envoy, who has lately been travelling in this part of the country, has caused drawings to be made from most of them. The best are by Vasco, among which I noted a head of St. Peter on canvass, the descent of cloven tongues, and a St. Geronimo, painted on wood; also a monk kneeling in prayer, by Gata. Above the altar of the *Capella dos Privilegios* is a very large picture of the Crucifixion, by Vasco, on wood.

In the cloisters, which are surrounded by small Ionic columns, are numerous tombs of great antiquity, and curious designs, covered with gilt and paint. There is also one, a plain stone monument, raised in memory of many persons (whose names are engraved on it) shot by order of Dom Miguel for entertaining liberal principles, in the year 1832. May neither they, nor the principles for which they shed their blood, be forgotten in Portugal! In every corner of the cloisters are pulpits, each appropriated to the service of some particular saint, or sacred event, whence on the days dedicated to them sermons are preached in their praise.

On inquiring for the tomb of Don Roderick, the last of the Goths, the sacristan sent his son to guide us to the church of St. Michael, outside the city, where it is placed. We traversed several dirty and narrow streets, till we reached a green mound, on the summit

of which stands the dilapidated church dedicated to the archangel. In it no mass has been performed since the French carried off all the ornaments and sacred utensils of the service. It is of small size, a simple two-gabled building, and is said to be the most ancient in Viseu. On one side of the high altar, within a simple arched niche, is a plain granite sarcophagus, with the following inscription on it :—

"Hic jacet, aut jacuit, postremus in ordine regum
Gottorum, ut nobis nuntia fama refert."

which L—— translated impromptu thus :—

"Here lies, or laid, the last of Gothic Kings,
Roderick, as babbling fame the story sings."

We cannot but admire the great caution of the writer of the epitaph, or rather the inscription, so careful in no way to commit himself by telling a falsehood. He first, indeed, says here lies, or did lie, but corrects himself in the next line, by observing, as fame hands the report down to us. If all writers of epitaphs had been equally scrupulous in their adherence to truth, how different would be the inscriptions on some of the tombs of those we are taught to consider as great men!

It however appears from various documents that there existed at one time another inscription on the tomb, which the Archbishop of Toledo gives thus :—

"Hic jacet Rodericus ultimus Rex Gothorum;"

but how or when it became obliterated nobody seems to know.

Through the medium of Southey's magnificent poem the romantic incidents of Don Roderick's his-

tory are well known; though I believe very few have any foundation in reality. But the Spanish writers of those and later days so delighted in the marvellous, adding frequently whole episodes of their own invention, that it is with difficulty one can extract the truth from the legends and exaggerated statements which fill up their chronicles.

The last few lines of Don Roderick, referring to this said tomb, are exquisitely beautiful:—

> "Days, months, and years, and generations past,
> And centuries held their course, before, far off
> Within a hermitage near Viseu's walls
> A humble tomb was found, which bore inscribed,
> In ancient characters King Roderick's name."

In his notes to the poem, Mr. Southey gives a translation of a fabulous chronicle in which the death of Don Roderick is described—how by the advice of a holy man, who lived in a hermitage near Viseu, he shut himself up with a serpent in the tomb, and allowed the serpent to eat into him till he died, as a penance for his sins. The serpent afterwards made a hole in the tomb, and crept out.

The veracious chronicler, Carestes, affirms that he found the grave in front of a little church without the town of Viseu.

This then is all that is known of the fate of that last monarch of the once powerful Gothic race, by whose lawless passion, it is said, his country was for so many years deluged with the blood of thousands.

We now returned through the city, to visit the fair, the active business of which we found, however,

was not to commence till the following day; yet there was much already to amuse us in the preparations, on a very considerable scale, now going forward, this being the greatest fair in Portugal. It is held in a large open space outside the walls of the city, across a stream holding about as much water as the river Torrens, on which stands the famed Australian city of Adelaide, is said to do in summer. On the further side of the campo are the embankments of the Roman encampment known by the name of the "Cava do Viriato," so called from its having been captured from the Romans by the celebrated Lusitanian hero Viriatus.

After walking through the canvass-streets I took up my position at the window of a large wooden house, containing several rooms, lined with coloured calico, erected by the master of our hotel as an eating-house. In a booth below tastefully decorated he was serving to numerous visitors coffee, lemonade, liquors, and wines; indeed, the whole edifice was in a style of elegance far superior to anything I have seen in England; but never having witnessed St. Bartholomew fair, perhaps I am not a proper judge of the matter. One thing I may observe, that probably so frail a structure would be quickly overthrown by the riotous visitors of the latter celebrated place; an event not at all likely to occur from the behaviour of the sedate inhabitants of the peninsula.

This was the only cool spot I had discovered during the day, so I sat there for some time, enjoying the fresh breeze, and amused with the bustling scene going forward below me. Here were canvass-booths in long

regular rows, filled with wooden and leathern shoes, large broad-brimmed hats, cutlery, cotton cloths of gay colours, saddles, eatables of all sorts; in short, everything that can be thought of in profuse abundance, to supply the simple wants of the people. Further on some persons were busily employed in erecting fresh booths and tents, and in an open space to the right horses were being exercised, and their paces exhibited, preparatory to the horse-fair,—the largest in the kingdom,—which would take place in three days.

The luxuries I had not expected to see were water-carts, scattering their refreshing showers over the hot dust; but I regretted not being able to remain to witness the fair in its glory. Except the temporary theatre, I saw no preparations for shows or public amusements, *i. e.* roundabouts, swings, &c. as we have at English fairs. The Portuguese are satisfied with those of a more sedate description; and as on this occasion they assemble from all parts of the kingdom, they find sufficient occupation in the actual business going forward.

On returning to our hotel to dinner, we passed the sè. On one side joining it is the prison, having large windows with iron bars, from between which men and women, crowded together in a most unseemly manner, were imploring charity. On the other side are various public offices, an asylum for the dumb, the residence of the civil governor, all under one roof. Opposite stands another large church, in a ruinous state, but workmen were employed in repairing the interior.

Many of the houses have deep verandahs with roofs

round the upper story, as had our hotel, the rooms we occupied opening into it. We had here no reason to complain of want of pleasant accommodation; nor, the market-place being in the square in front, of wherewithal to amuse ourselves.

After dinner, when the day became cooler, I called on Senhor Manoel Millo d'Abreu, for whom I bore a letter of introduction, and he politely offered his services in shewing us anything further worthy of notice in the city.

He first took us to visit the college, established, as an inscription over the chief entrance informed us, A.D. 1565; a building without any outward ornaments, being chiefly remarkable for a self-supporting staircase of stone, the only one of the description in Portugal. Long corridors run round the building, leading to the students' bed-rooms, each having a separate one, and which are neat and pretty beyond compare, the windows on every side commanding the finest views the city can afford. The students enter at twelve years of age, and go through a certain course of study before proceeding to Coimbra: those intended for the priesthood remain to complete their education. The professors are all priests. It was burnt down, by the French, I believe, and rebuilt by the Bishop of Viseu, who died in Lisbon a few days before our visit. This being the vacation-time, workmen were busily employed in preparing it for the return of the students. I was much pleased with the neatness and cleanliness of all I saw: of the system of education I have no means of judging.

Our next visit was to the hospital, also in the highest part of the city. The façade is imposing, the form of the building is square, with a quadrangle in the centre. The dispensary and laboratory, to the right of the chief staircase, are handsome and in good order, supplied abundantly, we were told, with instruments and drugs. We went through the wards, which were far, very far inferior in cleanliness and order to those of the Braga hospital. Though large they were ill-ventilated, and there were no divisions between the beds. The women's wards were smaller, and appeared to be rather cleaner. At the same time, had I not seen the Braga hospital, I might have been less critical in my judgment. Great part of the interior of the building is yet unfinished, workmen being employed in gradually enlarging the accommodations; but through want of funds the work proceeds but slowly. We mounted by a ladder to the roof of the edifice, whence, standing as it does high above all the neighbouring elevations, we enjoyed an extensive view, bounded on the south by the Serra d'Estrella; by the Caramula on the west; by the Marão and the Douro hills on the north; and extending as far as the eye could reach towards the east. I remembered then having seen it from the Serra d'Estrella; nor could a building of the sort be more admirably situated, affording to the suffering peasant an assurance that if human skill can avail, he will there meet with compassionate succour and care.

The number and size of the hospitals throughout Portugal, and the advantageous sites chosen for them,

speak more than any panegyric I can pen in favour of the people. That they are not all equal to that of Braga, is owing more to the want of means, than to any want of inclination on the part of their benefactors. I wish that the directors of this at Viseu would visit that excellent model, and conform theirs to it in every respect.

On our way back through the most ancient streets of the city we passed several Moorish and Gothic edifices. In one square tower, with richly-wrought arched windows, which, compared to the present style of building, appeared of very small dimensions, Edward the First of Portugal was born, it is said. Many of the modern houses are built upon the foundations, sometimes on the arches, of the former ones, that of our friend among the number; the city-walls invariably being made use of, either to form one side, or to serve as partitions in them. We passed through the narrow gate at the side of which Alfonzo Henrique, when rushing forth to encounter the Moors, is said to have injured his thigh so severely that he died. Viseu boasts also of many Roman remains, among which are two towers, supposed to be part of the citadel of Vacca, built by the consul Decius Junius Brutus.

Traversing the fair, we mounted the high embankment thrown up by the Romans to form their camp. The ditch has here been filled up, and in some places the bank has been levelled, which is a grievous pity, both that on the top of it a delightful walk could be formed for the inhabitants of the city, and that it

serves as a memorial of Lusitanian prowess—a most interesting relic of former times.

An English colonel in the Portuguese service, who at one time commanded there, with good taste planted several rows of trees, which are now tall and flourishing, and shew what might be made of the whole embankment. We walked on for a considerable distance on the top of the mound, till we had examined the most perfect part, where the outer ditch still remains full of water. There are several gateways—one known by the name of the consul who commanded there, and was slain in an encounter with the general of the Lusitani. As far as I could judge, I should consider the whole embankment full a mile in circumference, but the approaching darkness prevented our walking completely round it. A Senhor Campos, who understood English, a friend of Senhor Abreu's, made one of the party, and gave me much information. Kindly offering their further services if we required them, they accompanied us back to our hotel, where they wished us good-bye. My companions again sallied out to purchase in the fair some of the broad-brimmed white felt hats, which though not very becoming, are admirably suited as protections both against sun and rain.

Having seen all the lions of Viseu, we prepared for our departure on the morrow.

SKETCH XXIII.

From Viseu to Lamego peculiarly uninteresting. Village destitute of an Inn: Breakfast *al fresco*. Execrable Roads. Improve on approaching Lamego. Wretched Inns. Picturesque Situation of the City. Splendid Houses. Church of Nossa Senhora dos Remedios. Interesting ancient Chapel. The Cathedral: contains some admirable Pictures. The old City and Castle. The Hospital: solicitude for the welfare of the Patients. Domestic Sketch of the Mansion of Senhor Antonio de Souza.

I HAVE always found the greatest difficulty in getting a party to start early in the morning: some unforeseen causes of delay constantly occurring; thus one is seldom in the saddle till nearly an hour after the time agreed on. Such was the case on the present occasion; for as we had a long and rugged day's journey before us, we were on foot at a quarter past four o'clock, but the day had broke ere we cleared the gates of the ancient city of Viseu. We passed through the fair, already a scene of activity, and below the Roman encampment, then turned to our left over a wretched road up a low hill whence the city with its ancient towers and rugged walls, o'ertopped by the steeples of its churches, appeared to great advantage. For some distance the bridle-path we pursued was tolerable; up and down low hills and across many small streams, the ground stony and barren, with scarce a tree for several successive miles; indeed, the country between Viseu and Lamego is altogether the most wretched I have seen in Portugal; nor are there any interesting views to make amends for other failings.

We were much amused with a wild-looking sportsman that we overtook with a gun on his shoulder,

accompanied by several dogs, who with much earnestness assured us he was not a robber, and would do us no harm. He must have been conscious of his own rugged appearance; and indeed he would have been a suspicious-looking character to face alone in that desert spot. We met many long lines of mules, laden with merchandise for the fair, and also a great number of Spanish horses from two to three years old, without bridle or halter, following their owners, who, dressed in leggins, gay red belts, and embroidered jackets, rode sedately on some strong fine-looking cob in front. Many of the colts were well-bred, pretty looking animals, but invariably possessed the long Roman nose; a style of face I much dislike for a horse; yet it is a characteristic feature of all the Spanish racers. These were bred in Galicia and the north of Spain.

We stopped to breakfast at a large village without an inn, so we spread our table beneath the ample porch of some fidalgo's half ruined mansion, to which a broad flight of steps led up. The family, on the overthrow of Dom Miguel, having taken an active part in his cause, had fled, leaving the care of their house to a countryman, who complained that, as they remitted him no funds, he could not keep it in repair. In front was a wooden shed, erected for the accommodation of the travellers to the fair; and there cooking in various styles was going forward, and numbers of muleteers were eating and drinking to their hearts' content. In the middle of the street was a curious sort of cross, or rather a column, on the top of a flight of steps. I have seen many like it before the

largest house in almost every village: sometimes they have a coat of arms on their summit, doubtless that of the owner of the mansion; but this one bore only, as a crown, a collection of round stones piled one above another.

We waited here several hours, some of our party being overcome by the heat, which had been excessive in the morning; but on starting again a cool refreshing breeze sprung up. The road was most execrable, with nothing to enliven the way but the examination of the troops of horses as they passed, and occasionally putting up a covey of partridges. The horse of one of the party also cast a shoe, and no farrier was to be found nearer than Lamego; in fact, I believe there is not one on the whole road between that place and Viseu. My friend consequently, as is usual on such occasions with many people, commenced no very complimentary remarks upon the country, the people, their habits, customs, and their roads. I must say, the Portuguese are not behindhand themselves in abusing their own roads, and seldom travel over them if they can help it; so they must not marvel if strangers find fault. But it is not sufficient that they should admit their badness; they must set strenuously to work to improve them; for till means of easy communication are supplied through every part of the country, they never can recover their ancient wealth and power.

About a league and a half from Lamego the orange and the vine again greeted our eyes, and the hills, now covered with green, increased in height and variety of shape. My horse being in good condition,

I trotted on before, wishing to reach Lamego by daylight, which at the slow pace the rest of the party were obliged to proceed could not be done.

After a few turnings I found myself on a broad, roughly macadamized road, extending about a league from Lamego, a little way past a large village, near which are several quintas belonging to some of the wealthy fidalgos of Lamego. Among the number my friend Senhor Antonio de Souza has a very lovely one. The scenery is here very pretty; but I am sorry to say that even this road, well constructed as it is, with a fine parapet-wall on each side, is sadly neglected in many parts, whereas it might easily be kept in the best order. Trotting down a gradual descent, the city of Lamego appeared most picturesquely situated on the slopes and summit of a lofty hill before me, crowned by its ancient Gothic castle; and crossing a bridge over a torrent, I wound up for a considerable distance through a narrow steep street, making several turnings, and passing near the highest part some large handsome houses, till I arrived at the praça. In a narrow street near it I discovered the best inn the city affords, and that was, alas! about as dirty and bad as could well be. The only recommendation it possessed which I could discover was its great antiquity. Passing through a most ominously black kitchen, that served as a passage to the stables, I mounted a flight of well-worn stone steps, leading to a verandah running round a quadrangle, used as a stable-yard, and which was full of such heaps as those places generally contain. All the rooms opened

from this verandah, the best of which I secured for our party, containing three beds and a large dining-table. The truth is, few travellers who can support a good inn pass through Lamego; and such is the case in most places throughout the country; and thus it will remain till good roads induce people to explore its many beauties and interesting scenes. At last the rest of the party arrived, more weary with the slow rate of their progress than with the length of the journey we had made.

Lamego is one of the most picturesquely situated cities in Portugal. Standing itself on the summit of a hill, on every side hills, or rather mountains, rise up around it in many varied forms, with rugged cliffs, or bosomy slopes with rich green valleys, watered by sparkling streams and filled with pretty quintas, radiate from it. On its most elevated point stands a high square tower, surrounded by many ruined walls, which owes its origin either to Goths or Moors—I believe the latter;—and at some distance, the lofty tower of the cathedral, of equal antiquity, vies with it in height.

The city contains many fine houses, that of Macario de Castro especially, which may well be called a palace. It is handsomely furnished with every luxury England or France can produce, and has some very prettily laid out gardens adjoining it, on the slope of the hill, in the English style, with twisting walks, over which the trees are trained so as to form shady arbours. The façade of the house is very handsome, seen to advantage as it is from having a wide open

space before it. The interior also of Senhor Antonio de Souza's house is of considerable extent, and handsomely furnished, but the situation is not equal to that of the former, as there is no garden near it.

The most remarkable object in the neighbourhood of Lamego is the church of *Nossa Senhora dos Remedios*, which may be translated, Our Lady of Healing. It stands on the brow of a hill, to the south of, and facing the city; vast flights of stone steps leading up to it, considerably broader than those of the Bom Jesus of Braga; but the ascent, however, is not nearly so steep or lofty. The effect of it, as seen from the city across a green valley, is very good, though it is difficult to decide whether to it, or to its fellow of Braga, the palm of excellence ought to be awarded.

However, with the permission of my gentle readers, I will describe in detail what I saw in the city, with, at the same time, my own adventures.

Scarcely had I, on the morning after our arrival, issued from the inn with my friends who wished to make some purchases, and among them a sketch-book, than I unintentionally almost ran into the arms of my friend Senhor Antonio de Souza, on whom I had intended calling.

"When did you arrive?" was his first exclamation; and on being informed that we had spent a night in the place, he commenced a serious expostulation on the impropriety of our conduct in not coming at once to his house. "Send for your luggage, and quit that den of filth and wretchedness," he entreated us; and we were too happy to accept his kind invitation. He

insisted on aiding us in our purchases; and it is worthy of mention that a sketch-book I then ordered was brought to his house in the evening as well made as it could have been by a London bookbinder. He then offered to shew L—— and me the lions of the city, first conducting us to a small chapel on the side of the hill, where it is said the first cortes in the kingdom was held by Alfonso Henrique. The entrance-porch and choir are evidently of very ancient date, having the low, flattened, circular arch with ornaments similar to those seen in the ruins of the Early Norman castles in England: the remainder of the building is more modern, but still wears an antique appearance. Into one of the walls is let a tablet, with the following Roman inscription, a tribute from an affectionate husband to his beloved wife.

IVLIAI MARCII
MARCILIAI
Q SCALVLVS
VIGILVS VXORI

To Julia Marcia Marcilia,
the wife of
Quintus Scalulus Vigilus.

How little could the Roman knight have supposed that this tablet would adorn for centuries after a Christian temple! While the tombs of the proudest monarchs have sunk to decay, this simple stone has survived, a monument to pure conjugal affection, that holy love which we may piously believe still endures undecaying and undecayable in the realms of eternal bliss!

The view from the terrace before the chapel, look-

ing up a fertile valley, with the church and majestic flight of steps of the Senhora dos Remedios on the side of the hill, is very beautiful.

From this chapel we went to the sè, which is well situated, on a high part of the city, in the centre of a praça. The front, of the most simple Gothic, is very perfect, and handsome, having escaped the barbaric hands of modern builders, as has a lofty square tower on one side. The interior has been renovated with better taste than is generally displayed in the country. The columns supporting the roof are formed of massive square blocks of stone, but slightly carved, and undisfigured by paint, although the walls have not escaped the whitewashing brush. There is also but little tawdry gilding to annoy the eye, where all ought to be simple, pure, and chaste.

On the right, as one faces the high altar, in a lofty and elegant chapel with a groined roof of pointed arches, are three very beautiful paintings of the Italian school, but by whom I could not learn. The altar-piece, a very high narrow picture, is of the Last Supper: the expression of the Disciples' countenances, and the colouring, are very good, and the fore-shortening of the figures is admirable. On one side is the Agony in the Garden, in which the resigned yet beseeching expression of the Saviour's face, as an angel descends with the cup and cross, is very beautiful; I could almost fancy I heard the words, "Not my will, but thine, be done." I was even more pleased with this than with the others. The angel descending with the cup and cross is some addition to the story of the

ancient Fathers, who always delighted to substitute the corporeal for the spiritual, to suit the comprehension of the gross senses of the vulgar, I suppose. It may have been the painter's fancy, but I think not. The subject of the third picture is the Washing the Disciples' Feet. The figure of St. Peter to the right uttering the words, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" is remarkably fine, as are the humble looks of the other disciples, who have yielded to their Lord's request. Oh! that professing Christians did but comprehend the beauty and force of this scene, and follow that divine command: what a different world should we live in! Both the light and position being good, and the temple appropriated to them also most suitable, I was altogether more pleased with these pictures than with any I have seen in Portugal. The altar of this chapel is of silver beautifully chased.

In the body of the building there is a full-sized copy of Michael Angelo's painting of the angel Michael trampling on the Devil. I have seen the great original, though too long ago to be able to make any comparison. The colouring of this appeared to me too glaring.

A short time ago the church was sacrilegiously broken into, and several valuable ornaments stolen from it. This is now a very common occurrence in the country, and is easily accounted for. The thieves argue that gold and silver utensils belong to no one—brass or tin, which is generally employed, will answer the purpose as well; and having no very great respect for their sacred qualities, which late events have

taught them to despise, they with little difficulty or danger most conscientiously appropriate them. I have not heard of any perpetrators of sacrilege being apprehended, nor do I think they would now run much risk of the stake or faggot, though they would probably be hung as common robbers.

In the cloisters are several most antique chapels. They are of quaint taste; of rich and deep carved work, covered with gold and paint; the roofs of arabesque designs and figures. Either many of the ornaments from the Moorish mosques and houses were transferred to these Christian temples, or their designs were closely imitated—probably the latter. For many centuries after the expulsion of the Moors their tasteful designs remained; indeed, even in the present day they are seen in the ornaments on churches, but especially in the fountains and crosses, or rather columns. As we stood before the high altar, we observed two carved marble slabs on the ground, covering the entrance to the respective vaults of the two noblest and most ancient families in Lamego. One was of the de Castros, and the other of the Paços, the representative of the latter of which stood by our side, and pointed it out with some little pride; observing, that it was now closed for ever, he having erected a tomb in the adjoining burial-ground; a wise regulation permitting no one even of the highest rank to be interred within the walls of sacred edifices.

We then mounted to the summit of the belfry, the most ancient part of the whole building. The view thence embraces the city and Moorish castle, with

the hills rising in confusion around, and at a distance some lofty crags, among which our friend told us the scenery was remarkably wild and picturesque. This tower is curious from having every stone marked with a peculiar figure, or letter. They are Gothic characters, I believe. I should suppose that the stones formed part of some other edifice, perhaps of the same shape, and were thus marked, to enable the builders to replace them in the position they before occupied.

The most interesting place we visited was the old city and castle, which, though dilapidated by time, still retain their former boundaries, many of the houses even still existing complete. We entered the old city by a massive archway, low and narrow, so that it could easily have been defended by a single stout warrior; and then we climbed up one of the confined streets, built on the only accessible side of the conical hill, till we reached the court-yard of its castle, of which only one square tower now remains. Near it is another low square tower, built with the stones of the castle, to form a prison. In an edifice near it, of Moorish architecture, built on the very edge of the rock, the windows of which command a fine view, the courts of justice were till lately held. The stones of the tower and surrounding walls are all marked with the peculiar character I have mentioned. In a garden on the side of the hill, a little way below the castle, is a vast reservoir, with an arched roof in perfect preservation. Above it is a flat terrace, with an aperture in the centre whence to draw up the water.

This is most certainly Moorish; but I believe the castle may claim a still greater antiquity of existence. I am sorry to say rubbish had been shot into the reservoir, nearly choking it up, till the garden, becoming the property of another person, he with good judgment locked the door, and has determined to rescue it from destruction.

"Now, my friends," said Senhor Antonio de Souza, "I have shown you all the sights of Lamego, and we will adjourn to my house."

As we passed through the streets every one we met took off his hat to our friend, addressing him by the title of *fidalgo*—as "Oh fidalgo, will you have the kindness to grant me this favour?" or, "Yes, my fidalgo." When gentlemen speak to a person of the rank of a high fidalgo, they always in courtesy address him as Your Excellency. Thus Macario de Castro is always addressed. The Senhor is not added to his name, it being more complimentary to drop it, in the same way that we omit the "Mr." before the name of a Scottish chieftain.

I must not forget to mention a very interesting visit we paid to the hospital, a handsome building on one side of the Praça da Sè, and of which our friend was the director for the year. Though not equal in some respects to that of Braga, the wards are lofty and airy, the light being admitted from above. Below the sky-light he had constructed a screen to shade the patients' eyes, if necessary. Everything seemed clean, and in good order, the attendants and nurses having a very respectable appearance. There

were about a hundred patients, the funds not being sufficient to support a greater number; but our friend, who evidently took great interest in it, and had been elected director a second time, said he hoped by introducing various improvements to increase their means. We were preceded, as we walked through the different wards, by a man with a censer of burning perfume, an excellent idea, which ought always to be acted upon, for even in the best ventilated hospitals there is a sickening odour which prevents many from visiting them, and thus leaving their donations. A small chapel is attached to the building, where mass is regularly performed. On a certain day of the year a grand festival is held there, when the whole building is decorated; the beds are covered with the gayest counterpanes, and the patients are dressed in their cleanest attire. Every visitor of course subscribes something; crowds of peasants being among them.

It was highly gratifying to see a gentleman of the rank of our friend interesting himself so much in the arrangements of this admirable institution; and thus if in like way every other fidalgo in Portugal did their utmost to advance the welfare of their country, and the happiness of the classes below them, order and peace would soon shed their blessings on the land.

The mansion of Senhor de Souza directly faces the cathedral. The entrance is through a paved court, round which are the offices. The interior contains several suites of large rooms, handsomely furnished with luxurious sofas and chairs, suited to the

climate in the summer-rooms; those inhabited in the winter have also fire-places, and, in fact, all the necessary articles of an English house, though not so crowded together as is the fashion in the present day at home. After shewing us his riding and carriage-horses, among which was a young Spanish one he had just bought, on its way to the fair of Vizeu, he took us into the house, and then conducted us to our rooms. I feel pleasure in recalling to mind the neatness and luxurious look of those rooms, after the places we had slept in for the past days, nor can I forget the bed, which was the best I have ever slept in—neither soft nor hard, but possessing a smooth springy feel—I believe stuffed with the soft leaf which encloses the Indian corn.

I was much amused in looking over a work on the art of horsemanship, written by the Marquis of Marialva, in the reign of Dom João V. It is illustrated by prints of gentlemen in bag-wigs, three-cornered hats, and long coats and ruffles. If the young gentlemen had in those days to go through all the exercises there described, they must have become very perfect cavaliers. At that time the art was much cultivated by all the nobility of Portugal, many even entering the deadly arena of the bull-circus, where several lost their lives; but now it is less practised than in any country in Europe. Bull-fighting has also in a great measure been banished from the land.

Dinner being announced at about six, we returned to the drawing-room, where our host introduced us to his lady and several remarkably fine children. Thence,

with one or two guests we adjourned to the dining-room, the lady next to whom I was placed sitting at the side of the table, according to the more civilized fashion of the day. There is nothing I detest so much as to see a lady carving a huge joint, except being asked, when I am anxious to exert all my colloquial powers of pleasing, to perform the butcher-like operation myself. The dinner was in every way excellent; and although the cookery differed from the English, I did not taste a single dish with which the most fastidious palate could find fault. One or two plates might perhaps have been just rubbed with a shalot, but not more. We sat but a short time after the hostess and her daughters had retired, for I knew that our host drank but little wine; the custom however of sitting after dinner has become very general, wherever the English have set the bad example. On encountering us in the morning our friend had sent to invite several people to meet us at dinner, who did not make their appearance at the hour, but who dropped in during the course of the evening.

Among the guests was Marcario de Castro, with whom the Earl of Caernarvon was residing during his visit to that part of the country. He is a most intelligent and active-minded man, eager in all his plans for the amelioration of his country.

Much of the conversation was carried on in French, a language spoken by nearly all the party: the standard topic was the way and the means of constructing the projected roads. Our hostess played on the piano, and one of her daughters, a little girl about ten, per-

formed several difficult pieces of music on the same instrument. The Portuguese ladies have universally a talent for music, and the children a great aptitude for learning. They are usually more forward than English children, but their education stops too generally at an earlier age; for when it would be more advantageous for them to be studying their lessons with a governess, they are led as brides to the altar, and have all the cares of a family devolved on them.

I have taken the liberty of describing thus faithfully my Portuguese friend's domestic style of life, that those in my own country may be convinced that neither the gentlemen nor the peasantry are the uncivilized barbarians some writers have pictured them. He pressed us to visit him at his country-house, which is, I believe, superior to the one in the city, but we were unable to profit by his kindness, being anxious to see the progress of the vintage, just then commencing in the Alto Douro; and thither on the morrow we determined to wend our way.

SKETCH XXIV.

Family Sacrifices "to make a good House." Rich and pleasing Prospect on the Banks of the Douro. Difficult Road. Cross the River. Appearance of the Vineyards. Regoa and its neighbourhood. Vast Labour in the formation of the Vineyards. Extent of the Vine Country. The Douro Roads almost impracticable. *Coup d'œil* of our Location. Stirring Vintage Scene. Visit to several *Lagars*. Mode of expressing the Juice of the Grape. Other Processes. Excursions to a Roman Encampment—to Saint Domingos do Monte Coxo—and to the Salvador do Mundo. Overtaken by a Storm on our return from the latter Shrine. Useless and annoying System of Passports. Death of a Steed: Josè inconsolable for the loss.

I SHALL not forget the delicious coffee and hot rolls, with meat, eggs, and fine fruit of various kinds, with which our friend regaled us, at an early hour, before starting on our journey up the banks of the Douro. Two or three people came in during breakfast to pay their compliments, but the lady of the house did not appear; her husband offering the very sufficient apology, that she was about shortly to make a further increase to his fine family. "Graçios a Deos," he observed, "I have just received notice that another estate has been left me, so I shall have wherewithal to buy bread." He indeed is a man on whom fortune has showered her gifts; for though a younger brother, the elder being the Baron de Villa Pouca, by espousing the heiress of the noble house of the Paços he has become the representative of that ancient family, and the master of their wealth.

It is the case in other countries, but more particularly in Portugal, that when a man begins to

become rich, all his relations and friends on their decease seem anxious to increase his riches, for the purpose of making him the head of a wealthy and powerful house. "To make a good House," is the expression; and for the sake of so doing formerly all else would be sacrificed. Sisters would be sent to waste their bloom, and wear out their warm young affections, in the dreary, useless seclusion of a convent, under the vain pretence of dedicating them to the service of heaven—brothers would be made priests, or monks, to prevent their claiming any portion of the elder's gold; or, perchance, if refusing to assume the tonsure or the cowl, they were sent forth as outcasts to seek their fortunes in another hemisphere. With the diminution of the aristocratical tendency, and the abolition of monasteries, this evil, if so it may be considered, has much decreased also; and now all the brothers of a family are treated in general on equal terms. Provided the younger brothers receive a good education, and are launched into the world in a way suited to their birth, I think the system of making the elder one the head of the family, and possessor of the wealth, is not only advantageous to the rest, by affording them a point of reunion, but to the country at large, by preserving a class of hereditary aristocracy, who would, were the fortune divided on the death of the father, quickly become extinct. Although formerly carried to an excess in Portugal, I trust that in England, at all events, as well as in the former country, the day may be far distant when the laws of primogeniture will be abolished.

Accompanied by our courteous host, we proceeded, on leaving the city, along a broad well-cut road, down to the edge of the river Douro, about the distance of two miles. The view on the way is very fine. Various shaped hills rise from the stream, clothed in rich profusion with the olive, the orange, and the vine, interspersed with numerous quintas; below, is the broad stream of the Douro, and the neat shining white buildings of Pezo da Regoa, while beyond vine-clad mountains, clothed with numerous pretty houses, seem piled on each other; above all, appearing in bold relief against the blue sky, is the dark and rugged Serra de Marão, inferior only in height to the Serra d'Estrella. Not a more pleasing or rich prospect is to be found on the banks of the Douro, or, I suspect, in any other wine-producing country. Having reached the stream, while we proceeded along the southern bank towards the east, our friend bade us farewell, pressing us kindly to pay him a visit on our return to Oporto.

The narrow road conducted us close to the brink of the stream, and though bad, there was no great danger of falling into the water, till after we had passed a picturesquely-situated, dark, stone-coloured village called Folgoza, two leagues from Regoa. The two following leagues there was no road deserving of the name; sometimes we almost slid down the sandy willow-covered bank, and at other times were compelled to pick our way among and over the rough rocks, left here by the receding waters; indeed, till assured that we had pursued the right track, I could

not believe that this is the only land means of communication between the Upper and Lower Douro, except a long and rugged route up and down the mountains at a considerable distance from the stream, but which, when the river is swollen in winter, passengers are compelled to take. In no good humour with the roads of the Douro, we crossed the river, horses and men together, in a flat-bottomed ferry-boat, and arrived at a neat quinta on the slope of the other bank, belonging to Senhor Doutor de Lemos—*a Lavrador do Douro*, or Douro farmer, where we purposed remaining some days to witness the various operations of the vintage.

A vine-covered country far from equals the preconceptions of romantic beauty one has formed of it, from our admiration of the gracefully-trailed vine, loaded with its red and luscious fruit. The truth is, that the vine, in order to bear a grape fit for making wine, is cut down within a few feet of the ground, and therefore a vineyard does not equal in beauty a hop-ground in Kent; but then, who thinks of finding fault with the vineyard when travelling on a dusty road, beneath a burning sun, as he plucks a heavy bunch of its juicy produce? I must however confess to being in an unpoetical mood, and that on those occasions I should prefer a foaming tankard of Dublin stout.

Here the eye becomes weary with the interminable monotony of the lofty and steep hills which rise on each bank of the river, covered for leagues and leagues with stone-walls, forming narrow terraces eight or ten

feet deep only, to support the vines. Even in summer and autumn, when the green leaves partly conceal the walls, this is the case; but in winter, when naught appears but a rugged face of reddish earth, with a few olive-trees in the valleys, it is truly dreary; and no one would suppose that the vast power of produce there lying hid contains greater wealth than the richest mines of Potosi or Peru.

The most pleasing views on the Douro are in the neighbourhood of Regoa, where the hills, though lofty, are less steep than in most other parts, and where, receding from the river, they leave a broad and rich valley, through which the stream runs in a tranquil current, instead of rushing foaming down, as in other places. From the main valley another extensive one runs up on the north side to the very foot of the Marão, just to the west of Regoa. That town is divided into two parts, one street running along the banks of the river, the other rising up a steep hill at right angles to it. Formerly it was a place of small size, with most wretched houses, but of late years it has been very much increased, and now contains several excellent ones, some belonging to English merchants, extensive wine-stores, many respectable shops, and a good hotel; the buildings wearing an air of neatness and comfort particularly pleasing to the eye of the traveller from the interior. In the neighbourhood, perched on the sides of the hills, or secluded in the deep valleys, are numerous excessively neat and pretty villas, belonging to the

owners of the surrounding vineyards. On a nearer approach, the fastidious eye, accustomed to the beautiful order and comfort of our own sweet country-houses, would be much disappointed. Though the architecture of the exterior is picturesque, and suited to the climate in summer, and being neatly painted they look pretty, the interior arrangements are invariably bad, one room opening into another, without a separate passage, and some bed-rooms without windows, or means of ventilation; few also are calculated in any way to exclude the cold of winter. I speak of the smaller country-houses on the banks of the Douro, such indeed as the one in which we were residing, and which was considered superior to most others.

Villa Real, the principal city of Tras-os-Montes, is situated on an elevated plateau about three leagues to the north of Regoa, and at the foot of the Marão. I will describe it on a future occasion.

Regoa is situated in that part of the wine-country named the Lower Douro: a stream called the Corgo, half a mile to the east of it, separates the Lower from the Upper Douro. Directly after crossing the Corgo the mountains rise more abruptly from the river, the vine-terraces are scarped from the rocks in narrower lines, and consequently the vines being more exposed to the direct rays of the sun, the wine they produce is of a stouter quality, and more esteemed. Hence for many miles upwards the river has forced its way through precipitous and lofty rocks, undivided by what

may be termed valleys, the few indentations being in general rugged ravines, or mere channels for the mountain-torrents. Two or three streams of more consideration have worked deep glens between the mountains, their waters flowing a short distance from the river, but at a slight elevation above it. None are however navigable beyond a few yards from their mouths.

The labour and expense incurred in the formation of these vineyards may be inferred, when I state that nearly all have been cut out of the limestone-rock, a few rugged spots still remaining as nature formed them, to shew the wild appearance the banks of this part of the Douro must have borne, before they were brought under cultivation. No one on contemplating the extent of labour thus expended can accuse the Portuguese of indolence, or want of energy, when they have a sufficient stimulant to excite them. For my own part, when traversing so many leagues of country, which would otherwise have been the habitation of the prowling wolf, I was struck with admiration at the work achieved by the perseverance of man.

The wine-country proper extends along each bank of the Douro for the distance of nearly thirty miles, and is in most places six to eight miles broad, in some more, and in a few less. The greater part of this country consists of limestone-rock, or clayey slate, not a particle of it being level, but, on the contrary, up and down the steepest hills, sometimes so precipitous that it is no very easy task to climb them, as

their elevation is many hundred feet above the river, with the vines planted frequently to their very summits.

Such is the Wine-country of the Douro; every hill, it must be remembered, cut into innumerable terraces, the walls forming their sides being about five to six feet high, and composed of large stones—for any slight structure would quickly be washed away—and some idea may be formed of the immensity of the work. Every year fresh mountains are brought under cultivation, the line of vineyards gradually extending eastward; and I believe that even to the confines of Spain the hills are equally suited to the production of the grape.

The situations best calculated to produce the richest grapes are those on the sides of the hills facing the south, and which enjoy the greatest quantity of sun; the lowest and most sheltered spots being in greatest esteem. The grapes growing near the summits of the mountains are more watery, and form a lighter and thinner wine.

The villages, with the houses and wine-stores of the poorer people, being built of the same dark reddish brown stone as the sides of the hills on which in every direction they are perched, have a mean and wretched appearance; nor do their interiors generally belie their outer aspect. The roads and tracks by which a communication is kept up between the villages and the river are the very worst I have ever travelled over; it being dangerous, if not impracticable,

to pass some of them on horseback. They run directly up and down mountains, over rough crags, or water-worn slippery rocks, often at an angle of less than forty-five degrees. Indeed, the Douro roads are execrable. The truth is, they were most unscientifically cut in the palmy times of the Douro, and have never since, with but few exceptions, received any repair. A broad road leads out of Regoa towards Villa Real, and a few other pieces have been commenced in different directions, but it is impossible to enjoy a ride anywhere without a very considerable risk of breaking one's neck.

I spent eight or ten days very pleasantly in the Upper Douro, what with observing the wine-making, riding in search of the picturesque, sketching, shooting, fishing, and banqueting with our numerous English and Portuguese friends collected there for the purpose of superintending the vintage. I shall not however give a diary of my proceedings, for fear of wearying my readers, as I should most certainly do myself: but I will try to give a comprehensible account of the vintage, which may prove amusing.

From the windows of the house we enjoyed a more interesting view than is usually found on the Douro. The mansion is situated but a short distance up the banks from the river, and thus every boat which passes was seen: the prospect also extending up and down for a considerable distance. Directly facing us across the river rose a high conical mountain, like a mighty giant overshadowing us, and so close, that we could hear a shout from a person climbing its sides. On the

summit is a Roman encampment, which I visited during my stay. At some distance to the left, where the river makes an abrupt turn, giving it a lake-like appearance, is a stream called the Pinhão, with a village of the same name, and some large wine-stores belonging to the Company close to the water. Above, and along the banks, are scattered many houses, and perched high up the mountain, like an eagle's nest, apparently inaccessible to the foot of man, is the village of Cazal de Lobos, not inappropriately styled the Den of Wolves—vineyards and olive-trees covering nearly the entire surface of nature.

After dinner, on the first day of my arrival, as we were strolling on the terrace in front of the house, we were attracted, by the sound of music, to a low building near us, and entering, we found some thirty or forty men and women dancing to the notes of a pipe, fiddle, and tambour. A small lamp alone gave light to the wretched hovel. The dancing was not particularly animated, till a few coins distributed among the people threw more spirit into their movements. They then commenced snapping their fingers, threading their way in and out as they danced in a circle; and the men at last grouped themselves in the centre, while the girls danced round them. The latter were, I believe, intruders. Pallets were placed against the walls, such as are fitted up in temporary barracks, for the men to sleep on. They were chiefly Gallegos; and were there collected to commence the vintage on the morrow.

On the following day a scene of animation and activity began. The sides of the mountains were

covered with women and boys, some cutting the rich bunches of grapes from their parent stems, some picking off the rotten or dry fruit, and others collecting them in large baskets; then down the steep path long lines of Gallegos were seen wending their way, bending under the weight of the heavy high baskets laden with fruit, towards the building containing the wine-presses; the voices of the young girls, as they sang merrily at their work, resounding from hill to hill, and every mountain sending forth the same joyous tones. It was indeed a scene the poet may well love to describe.

Turning from contemplating it, I entered a building containing a wine-press, or, as it is called in Portuguese, a *Lagar*. The presses vary in size: they are tanks about twenty feet square, and two to three deep, of massive stone-work, and raised considerably from the ground. The *tonels* hold sometimes thirty pipes, and are made of oaken timbers, in the shape of pipes. They are generally in a lower building, so that the wine may run off from the press by a channel into them. Above the press is a vast beam, weighed down by a heavy stone, intended, by placing boards beneath it, to press the last remaining juice from the husks of the grapes, when the men can no longer extract anything from them. Into the presses the men were now emptying their baskets, while a bare-legged urchin stood in the centre, with a rake, levelling the bunches as they were thrown in, another picking out the thicker stems which made their appearance. The grapes are sometimes separated from the stems; but

as the latter are said in good seasons in no way to injure the delicacy of the wine, they are allowed generally to remain.

In another lagar the men had commenced pressing. It was a large one, and contained full forty people, their trowsers rolled tightly up their legs, which were keeping time to the music of guitars, fifes, fiddles, and drums, as they danced in the ruddy sea, their voices every now and then joining in a wild chorus. There was a lagar adjoining the house, and till twelve o'clock at night, when the men are allowed to rest for a few hours, did their wild music and wilder cries ring in my ears.

The grapes are thus trodden under foot for two, three, and four successive days, with intervals only of six hours, till the juice is supposed to be thoroughly expressed, and the skin well bruised, to extract the colour; for it is in the skin alone the colour resides. The wine is then allowed to ferment with the husks for about the same length of time, according to the greater or less degree of saccharine matter it is required to retain: it is then that the husks and all impurities having risen to the top, the *must* is drawn off into the *tonels*, and brandy is thrown in to preserve it. It is now carefully sealed up till the winter. The husks are again pressed to give out any remaining liquid, for the use of the labourers.

The most delicious perfectly white wine is made under the name of *Lagrima Christi*, from the red grapes, by drawing off from the luscious mass the first juice which exudes without pressing the skin. It is

a most absurd mistake to suppose that a dark colour is a good quality in port wine; the best and most delicate red wines are invariably of a light colour. People in England are apt to suppose that the colour exists in the juice of the grape, whereas, as the above example shews, it exists alone in the skin of the grape, precisely in the same way as does a negro's jetty hue in his skin, and not in his blood.

One feels excessively disgusted at first on seeing dirty-looking men dancing about in a liquor one purposes to drink, or rather had purposed, for it now appears impossible that a spectator of the process would ever again touch a drop of wine, till he recollects that in the act of fermentation it cleanses itself from all impurities, and that the bright sparkling liquid brought to him at table is as free from all defilement as the rain just fallen from heaven, or the pure water from the fountain-head.

There was one thing I could never do, that is, taste the dark muddy mass in which the thirty or forty Gallegos were dancing; yet I have seen many persons, with the greatest nonchalance, putting to their lips to taste, but not to drink, a glass of the then nauseous and sickening liquid, drained off the heel of one of the wine-pressers, the man lifting his leg over the side of the lagar for the purpose. Habit, and the pursuit of wealth, will reconcile the most fastidious to the oddest customs. I must observe, however, that it is the practice, after the men have been withdrawn, and the fermentation is taking place, to make a hole in the thick cake of stones and

husks, and then to insert a tube, into which the wine rises, the finger being placed at the top to prevent it again falling. I confess that I tasted the liquor in that state, when it had an excessively sweet, though rather sickening flavour.

But as such accounts can afford but little amusement to people in general, especially to my fair readers, I will give the amount of the information I possess respecting the vine of Portugal and its produce in a sketch by itself, that it may be skipped by those to whom it would probably prove uninteresting.

The first excursion I made was to the summit of the conical mountain opposite the house, in company with the friend, a young barrister, with whom I afterwards travelled into Spain; nor could I have found a more agreeable and highly educated companion, whose calm philosophical mind judged of men and things in their true light, observing all with an acute eye, and who—no mean qualification for a traveller—never grumbled at the difficulties and inconveniences we were doomed to suffer. Making a circuit of two or three miles up the river, towards the east, among vineyards and olive-trees, we reached a high and narrow ridge, which led to the back of the mountain, and there dismounting, we sent our horses down, while we clambered up the remainder of the ascent. This was a work of no little difficulty, for the crown of the mountain was a complete forest of the gum cistus and other strong-stemmed shrubs, through which we were obliged to force our way. At last, on reaching the summit, we were amply rewarded for our labour by

the fine view we enjoyed of the vast succession of mountain-ranges extending as far as we could see on each side of the Douro.

We then proceeded to search for the remains of the encampment, which we had some difficulty in discovering, among the brushwood. Once, however, having found the outer wall, we traced it completely round the summit: we then traced an inner circle, which appeared to have been divided into two parts by a double wall running across the centre. We agreed at last that tradition had rightly assigned it as the site of a Roman watch-camp; the situation being admirably adapted for such a purpose, commanding as it does a view of so many other hills; but whether we were right or not, I leave it to those better versed in Roman antiquities than I am to determine. We confessed, indeed, that we might possibly be wrong in our conjectures.

The people in general of whom we made inquiries have, of course, no very definite ideas by whom the cities, castles, and monuments, now heaps of ruins, scattered in profusion over the country, were originally built; the Romans, Goths, Moors, or some ancient people, being usually classed under one head, as the authors of each.

After enjoying the cool breeze and lovely view for some time, we commenced our descent towards our temporary home, which appeared most invitingly near. It even seemed that the savoury odours of the roast pig and other delicacies, awaiting our arrival to be devoured at dinner, might reach us; but we soon

discovered that the task before us was far more difficult than any we had yet performed. We were first obliged to work our way downward between the tangled bushes, with a prospect every instant of falling on our faces; then we came to a line of precipitous rocks, which had appeared as mere steps from below; and as we could not venture to leap them, we had to make a course to the left, till we found an opening, down which we slid. Still we could see nothing but thick brushwood before us. Interminable seemed the labyrinth; and we were almost despairing of ever escaping from it, when we discovered that there were vineyards on each side of us, and that we had been traversing a line of shrubbery extending almost to the bottom of the mountain. "Ah! we shall easily descend by the vine-terraces!" I exclaimed; but when we reached them, we found that the difficulties had increased. Alas for our aching legs! for no path appeared. We discovered that each terrace was five or six feet above the other; and though one or two such descents were easy, it was rather jarring to the frame to leap down a hundred of them. The anticipation of gratifying our hungry appetites urged us on. Down, and down we leapt, regardless of the long-entwined tendrils of the vines, which caught us ever and anon in an almost deadly embrace; thoughtless of the danger we were incurring to life and limb;—now and again also the stones would come rolling after us, to punish us for our trespass; but our good genius prevailed. For some minutes, wearied with our toil, we sat composedly down to discuss a few of the luscious bunches of grapes

growing by our side. A path there must have been for the grape-pickers and carriers to reach the terraces, but possibly a long distance off. At last a line of olive-trees caught our sight. "There the descent must be easy!" I cried; and we made towards them. Our sight had deceived us, for the hill was steeper than ever, and the walls higher; but we had grown desperate; so down we slid with our faces towards the sky, turning a wistful eye every now and then towards the house containing our dinner. Thus progressing, at last we glided into what we were seeking—a path—and falling on our feet, we quickly completed the descent, and crossed the river to the long-wished-for bourne of our hopes.

This is somewhat of the sort of ground the sportsman on the banks of the Upper Douro has to traverse in search of game. The red-legged partridge abounds on these mountains, and even from the house we could hear their loud harsh notes every morning, particularly on the hill I have just described. Hares also are found, as well as abundance of rabbits. L—— and several other friends were out every day with their guns, and seldom returned without a few brace of partridges; though to gain them they were themselves almost knocked up, and many a heavy fall did they receive;—now their feet caught by the vines, then slipping over a smooth rock, or again tumbling over the walls. Besides their fatigues they were often tantalized, after perseveringly following up a covey, by seeing it take flight to the opposite bank of the river, or to some neighbouring hill with a deep valley

intervening. Such is sporting in the Douro. The sportsman who accompanied them was a fine specimen of a mountaineer of the Gothic race. He was a tall, handsome youth, with dark brown ringlets—a great dandy in his way—but who with his long rusty gun proved himself the best shot of the party. A great number of the Portuguese countrymen are excellent marksmen, being accustomed to the use of a gun from their boyhood, there being no game-laws to restrict them in employing it, nor from the abundance of game are any required for its protection, could they by any possibility be enforced. I had not carried my gun, and was more amused in riding over the country and making sketches.

Another day we rode to the summit of a mountain far more lofty than the former, on the north side of the Douro, appearing among its brethren second only to the Marão. Our road took us through a large village, called Covas, romantically situated on both sides of a torrent in a deep secluded glen, the mountains rising almost perpendicularly on each side, covered with terraces and vines. We then ascended by a rugged path for a considerable distance, our horses almost knocked up by the toil, till we concluded that if we took them higher we should not be able to bring them down again. At this juncture a peasant appearing, we begged him to hold our horses while we proceeded on foot: he however offered to put them inside a cottage hard by, and to guide us himself to the shrine, on the summit of the very holy Saint Domingos do Monte Coxo. Agreeing to his proposal, we

soon found ourselves mounting towards the rugged summit covered with a great variety of low shrubs and plants. On the highest point stands a small dilapidated chapel, and near it a shed for horses; for hither on some day in July assemble the inhabitants of all the neighbouring villages to do honour to the saint, and to amuse themselves to the best of their power in dancing, singing, and eating.

"Look, Senhores," said our guide, who was evidently proud of his mountain, "what is so high as we are, except the Marão, and that is a giant? we look down upon everything. Now within sight there are seven other St. Domingoses; for there are seven brothers, and we are the highest of them all." I am almost tired of giving descriptions of mountain-views, as my friends must be of reading them; but this I cannot refrain from sketching, as it afforded a complete panorama of the Wine-country. To the west the wealth-bearing Douro wound its way far beyond Regoa, among high and precipitous mountains, their tops only appearing to us. The highest, and seen from its base, was the dark serra of the Marão overtopping them all, and stretching far to the north, when it seemed to rise abruptly from a plain which extended towards us, scattered with several villages and hamlets. Among hills rising gently from the lower ground, near the base of the serra, was the comparatively modern, but excessively pretty, city of Villa Real, the gem of the province of Tras-os-Montes. To the east, mountain-tops, some crowned by vines, some with trees, some with brushwood, and others barren and rugged,

appeared as far as the eye could reach, the nearer ones of many varied tints, the further of different shades of blue, approaching almost to black; green valleys intersecting them, and silvery streams dashing down their sides, and finding their way in an intricate course towards the river. Many a white shining quinta, and several smiling villages, too, could be discerned, on the less precipitous slopes of the hills, while flocks of sheep or goats browsing near us, tended by their careful keepers and watchful dogs, gave life to the scene; their bells sounding cheerfully to the ear.

On the topmost points of six of the more lofty hills we descried the six other small chapels, dedicated to the much-honoured Saint Domingos; most of them, it must be confessed, like their higher brother, having suffered severely from the ravages of time and the fierce storms to which they have been exposed. Notwithstanding that, they are picturesque objects, memorials of the piety of ancient days, or, as some might say, of bygone superstition, which would build shrines on high places for the worship of a mortal as liable to sin as ourselves. Indeed, the view was most lovely, and I should advise all my friends who may pay a visit to the Douro to ride to the summit of the Monte Coxo. The dark shadows of the mountains, as the sun sank in the west, cast a gloom over the deep valleys through which we passed on our descent, and made us yet more regret the wide glowing scene we had quitted.

The following day, with a larger party, I started at an early hour to visit a celebrated shrine called the

Salvador do Mundo, situated at the distance of three leagues from the Quinta de Batteiras, on the summit of a lofty rock rising precipitously from the waters of the Douro. We first crossed the river, riding for some way along its rugged banks, to one of the most esteemed wine-quintas, called Ventuzello, belonging to Senhor Antonio de Souza; then turning to our right up a narrow steep path, leading through his extensive vineyards, we at last gained the more elevated ground, where the vine had ceased to flourish, and after passing the large village of Ervedoza, we found ourselves on the side of a barren and rugged hill, which refused, it seemed, to produce ought but crops of stones. All the country round wore the same sterile aspect. There was little to interest us on the way, except a discovery we made in natural history, that black beetles have in some respects the same habits as the emmet tribe. "Look! what a troop of immense ants!" cried one of the party, and reining in our steeds, we collected round the spot he indicated. There in a long line we observed a troop of black beetles, each pushing before him down the hill a ball of horse-dung as large as a marble. Now when the descent was steep, one would roll over and over perseveringly clinging to his charge; now when the ground was level, he would urge it forward as a man does a cask, till he reached his storehouse in safety. We much admired their industry, but not their selection of food, if for that purpose it was intended. I have since learned that some species of English beetles have the same propensities; a fact of which some of my readers may not be aware.

Near the well-situated but miserable-looking town of St. João de Pesquiera the country bore a better cultivated appearance, the keen air of its elevated position giving us an appetite for breakfast. There are among the hovels several large handsome houses in the town, belonging to gentlemen of property, one of whom, an acquaintance of some of the party, immediately on our arrival, sent to invite us to his residence; but hearing he was ill in bed, we were unwilling to trespass on his well-known hospitality; excusing ourselves on the plea of being in haste to proceed. We were compelled to stop to satisfy our ravenous hunger at the most dilapidated, wretched edifice, called an inn, I ever entered; nor were the provisions we obtained tempting to the sight or taste, except eggs, a melon, and some grapes, which, with tolerable bread, enabled us to exist.

Leaving our horses to bait, we walked with a guide who persuaded us the chapels were but a mile off, through a well-cultivated quinta, and past a remarkably pretty house, situated in a valley with vine-clad hills on every side. Emerging from the quinta we soon felt convinced that our guide's quarter of a league would extend to a long half, and so it proved; the rascal all the time affirming that the heat of the weather made it appear longer. Our thirst was so great that even the numerous bunches of grapes we plucked could not allay it. At last the chapels appeared before us, rising one above the other, surrounded by trees, on a rocky peak. A neck of land leads to it, on each side of which are deep ravines bending down to the

Douro. The river is visible also both to the right and left. The chapels contain large wooden figures representing scripture history, like those of the Bom Jesus of Braga, but executed in an inferior style. On the top of the rock is a church, standing near the edge of a precipice of many hundred feet in depth ; and so perpendicular is the cliff, that it appears as though one bold leap would carry a person into the centre of the stream, and almost across to the opposite side of the chasm. Formerly a ledge of rock ran here across the river, causing it to fall perpendicularly several feet, and rendering all navigation impossible higher up, without a most tedious portage, till an English engineer succeeded in completely clearing it away.

Notwithstanding our long walk, we scrambled down by a narrow path to our left, and worked our way over the broken fragments till we stood almost under the cliff. There looking up at the gigantic rocks, or down into the dark mysterious water, which with a placid surface came gliding by, the scene was truly grand. I lay beneath the shade of a rock for some time, admiring it, as did my companions, and while I sketched they fell fast asleep*. At last I aroused them to their toil; for to ascend to the high ground was very different to descending ; but we triumphed over fatigue, and had walked back some way, before we met our steeds for which we had sent.

I tasted at the dilapidated venda some brandy mixed with water, made in the old-fashioned style : it

* See First Sketch, Vol. II.

was truly fire-water. The taste was most unpalatable; but being excessively heated, I was afraid of a weaker beverage, particularly when a heavy shower came rattling down, almost wetting us through, before we had time to reach the stable.

We were fortunate for some way on our return to escape more of the deluging showers, though inky clouds, their outer edge tinged with the orange hue of the setting-sun, were rolling towards us over the mountain-tops, in vast threatening masses, seeming ready to sweep all before them. Suddenly two dark masses met, when flash after flash of the most vivid lightning broke forth, startling our horses as we urged them forward down the steep descent, regardless of the many risks we ran of being precipitated over their heads, and being crushed in their fall. Just as we reached the stream opposite Pinhão the water-spout broke, and long were we compelled to stand shivering on its banks, before the ferrymen on the other side would consent to hear our voices—then only two of our party could cross at a time with their steeds, so that those who remained were obliged to resign themselves hopelessly to be drenched. This they became most completely. As we rode under the high banks streams were rushing across the road, and waterfalls dashing down the mountain's side, where in the morning dry rocks only had appeared.

Those who live on plains have no idea what a mountain-shower is. The fierce dark clouds seem too proud to send forth mere dribbling showers of rain, but dashing towards the ground, they seek to overwhelm it with one heavy mass of water.

A change of clothes and a good dinner soon restored us to comfort.

The whole of the next day I spent in the house, or in wandering near it; receiving visitors, and waiting for the *Administrador do Districto*, who politely came several miles to draw out the passport I required for Spain; he being, of course, asked to stop and dine. He dictated, while a priest who was at table wrote the necessary document, which proved equally useful as one given by an ambassador would have been. I was obliged afterwards to send it to receive a stamp at the chief town of the district, paying about ten shillings, little of which probably reached the public exchequer. For any useful purpose to government, the passport-system, as at present managed, is of no service; and it should be altogether abrogated. I hope the Portuguese may set the enlightened example to their continental neighbours of entirely abolishing those restrictious vexatious to honest travellers, perfectly useless as they are in arresting knaves.

This morning our arrieiro, Josè, was in a great state of tribulation. L——'s horse caught cold some days ago—a violent inflammation ensued, he was bled and blistered, and appeared to be recovering, but on his way to the farrier who was to take charge of him, after several tumbles, he rolled over and expired. He was a very handsome, active horse. Josè being inconsolable, he came to me wringing his hands and weeping bitterly: "Oh! Senhor, what will become of me? My master in Oporto will not forgive me; he will say it was through carelessness the poor animal

died; yet, heaven knows, I treated him better than myself." Tears dropped from his eyes at the time he spoke. We comforted him at last by telling him we would assure Senhor Lopez he had taken the utmost care of it.

R—— and I were in perfect readiness, expecting a friend to accompany us, when we heard of his being seized with a violent fever. Several Englishmen who remained long up the country suffered much on their return home with fevers and agues. They are most prevalent in the hot season, on the banks of the Upper Douro, caused by the excessive warmth of the day, and the cold damp air which blows over the water at night. Many of the unfortunate Gallegos fall victims to this pestilence; and indeed even the acclimated residents suffer some years severely. They, however, if they can avoid it, never sleep at those times near the stream, but retire to houses, which most of them possess, on the high grounds at a distance. The cholera morbus made dreadful ravages in these districts on its visit to Portugal; the pestilential vapour being confined in the deep and narrow valleys among the mountains. My former companion L——, preferring the delights of shooting partridges to the risk of breaking his neck on the bad roads, and our sick friend not being able to proceed, R—— and I alone prepared to make the expedition into Spain together.

SKETCH XXV.

Road towards Almeida. Magnificent View. Ruined (Moorish?) Town of Normão. Village of Orta. Useful hint to Travellers in Portugal. Bee Cities. Monchegata. Ford the Coa. Rugged and dreary Hills. Town of Almendra. Accept a most kind and unlooked-for Invitation. Castel Rodrigo. Sketch of Society—the Trading Class. Projected Cloth Manufactory. Vast Tracts of Land uncultivated owing to the scanty Population: Emigration of Irish proposed. Much interested in meeting with a Fellow-countryman. Push on for Almeida.

At about twelve o'clock on Sunday morning, R—— and I, on our good steeds, left the Quinta das Batteiras, followed by the hapless Josè with our baggage-mule, and passing through the Quinta de Ventuzello after crossing the river, took the direct road to Almeida.

Leaving St. João da Pasquiera on our left, we perceived at a short distance from a large village a chapel on the hill-side, dedicated to *Nossa Senhora d'Estrada*—Our Lady of the Road; where all the almocreves, arrieiros, and cattle-drivers, devoutly inclined, stop to pay their devotions. But though we offered to wait for Josè while he offered up an *Ave Maria* at the shrine, I regret to say by the answer he made he exhibited a great laxity in his religious principles.

"*Ora! Nossa Senhora* has enough to do to look after herself, without thinking about me—I have nothing to say to her, and she has nothing to say to me," he grumbled out as he jogged on, sitting bent almost double on the top of the luggage behind us.

We much enjoyed our afternoon's ride, for the

ground being high the air was pure and exhilirating, and we were glad to escape from the confinement of the valleys of the Douro, the eternal view of the wine-terraces, and the odour of the fermenting wine, which had sickened us for some days past.

Having got to the eastward of Pesquiera, we enjoyed a most magnificent view, well worthy a visit from any admirer of nature who may be in the vicinity. The mountain-sides slope towards each other, leaving an open space through which the Douro, like a silver lake, is seen in the distance; to the left rises the Salvador do Mundo, crowned by trees and chapels; to the right, on an elevated ridge, are the ruins of a Moorish, or Gothic fortress; while directly in front, across the river, rise dark lofty precipices, mountain above mountain seen beyond them. The summit of some were tinged with an orange hue by the setting sun, others thrown into the blackest shade, and others far beyond blue and bright, like some fairy-land severed from communion with this world of ours.

We then rode towards the ruined town of Normão, which I believe to be Moorish, but a deep valley intervening before we could reach it, we were unable to examine it more minutely. The greater part of the outer walls and several towers remain; a considerable number of houses within them being still inhabited, we were informed, by the poorest people. It was formerly the seat of a magistrate's jurisdiction, now removed to the more modern town of Sabadella, situated in a valley about two leagues from it. Similar fortresses to these abound on each bank of the Upper

Douro, those to the north built probably by the Goths, those to the south by the Moors; the sway of the latter not having extended, for any length of time, beyond the north of the Douro; while the province of the Beira Alta, as it appears, was for a considerable period under their jurisdiction. In the same way the Goths, as soon as they recovered possession of the Minho and Tras-os-Montes, built the fortresses on the north bank of the Douro, to defend their then very limited territories.

Turning from our inspection of Normão, we galloped across some ploughed fields to regain the road we had quitted, and to overtake Josè, whom we found, after descending a hill, among a grove of fine chestnut-trees, just entering the village of Orta; the sun having sunk too low to proceed further. The inn had a most unprepossessing appearance. Disturbing some pigs feeding on ground evidently appropriated to their use, we ascended a flight of stone steps into a verandah. The first room we entered was the kitchen, where several people were sitting round a table, who took no notice of our entrance.

"Where is the cook?" I asked.

"Here, Senhor!" answered a pleasing-looking woman. "What do you want?"

"Some food," I rejoined.

"You must please then to stop till these persons are served," she responded quietly, and continued her culinary occupations.

I knew remonstrance would avail us nothing; so, without losing our temper, we walked through the

house. The next division contained a loom; the third, shoemakers' tools and implements; and the last, two dirty looking beds, a chest of drawers, a corn-bin, a cask of wine, some musical instruments, spirit-bottles, an oil-jar, a cloak hung against the wall; indeed, a variety of other articles too numerous to be named, with a couple of rather shaky chairs; but no table of any sort. This we found was to be our chamber, and little expectation had we of being able to sleep in it.

Our increasing hunger took us back at length to the kitchen, where the first-arrived guests having been served, the mistress of the house was ready to obey our wishes; the master also, having come in from the stables, was equally anxious to please us. Our saddle-bags being abundantly supplied, we ordered merely an omelette, and some other dish in compliment to the lady; entreating her to supply us with the necessary articles for the table. No people could be more civil than they became in consequence of our patience, and a few compliments. They spread a clean cloth on the top of the chest of drawers, for not a table was there in the house, and brought us all we asked for; afterwards standing near us, looking on in amazement at our strange mode of proceeding, and the singular things we possessed. We won their hearts still more by giving the husband a glass of our wine, which he handed to his wife, saying he had never tasted anything so nice.

Our satisfaction was very considerable when they afterwards brought in a pile of snow-white, perfumed sheets, of fine linen, and several clean woollen cover-

lids, of many gay colours. We asked them how they became possessed of such things; when they told us, exhibiting several others, that the wool came from the backs of their own sheep or those of their neighbours, that it was spun at home, and dyed at home with herbs plucked by themselves, except the log-wood, which they bought. The colours were very well marked and bright, some of the coverlids being excessively heavy, for winter use. The thread also was spun, and the linen for the sheets woven, at home. Notwithstanding our prognostications on entering, we could not have had better beds in the best inns in the country. With but few exceptions, even in the most wretched-looking places we entered during our travels, we were always supplied with clean and fine sheets, by civilly asking the landlady for them, and treating her with the attention she always expects. If, on the contrary, strangers on entering an inn in Portugal offend the people of the house, by ordering them about authoritatively, the chances are that their food is badly dressed, and that they are left to pass the night wrapped up in their cloaks, as they best can. We were obliged to go to bed at an early hour, for the small lamp afforded too little light either to read or write.

We rose by lamp-light, but Josè, more obstinate than his beloved mule, had determined we should not start till it was broad daylight, so took care not to be ready. We had however proceeded some way before the sun rose with dazzling splendour in our eyes. Our road was wild and rugged, leading us up and down mountains, with but little level ground. One

time we were riding for some distance up the bed of a stream, now perfectly dry, though the willows yet flourished on its banks: at the end of it, however, we came upon a large extent of water, which convinced us that a wintery shower would quickly convert it into a foaming torrent, and compel the traveller to take a longer route over the mountain. On descending a hill, which, with all the surrounding ones, were covered with plants bearing flowers in the spring and early summer, we observed at no great distance several bee-cities, we may call them. They consisted of some thirty or forty hives, each covered with stones, forming a separate house, standing a few feet apart, and entirely surrounded by a wall. There were numerous ruins of the same description near at hand, apparently successively abandoned.

Two leagues from Orta we passed through a large village called Monchegata, leaving Josè far behind. I was at times so annoyed with the brutal obstinacy of our arrieiro, that I would have almost sacrificed our luggage, provided I was sure he would fall into the hands of robbers who would have well thrashed him.

Passing over a wild extent of mountain, we descended towards the river Coa, which falls into the Douro. Hearing that there was a boat-passage at some little distance we rode towards it, following a slight track, but arriving near it, a shepherd-boy watching his flocks on the mountain-side told us the boat was broken, and that we must return to the ford. We turned our horses' heads accordingly, but in attempting to make a shorter cut than the way we went,

we became entangled among the valleys and courses of the winter-torrents, now riding up one, and now down another, till we were completely bewildered. At last we espied what looked like a track, and following it, we fortunately reached the edge of the cliffs, down which we were to descend to cross the stream. The path was so steep that I thought it dangerous even to lead my horse, and therefore drove him before me, trusting to his sagacity to find the best way. At one moment I thought he was at fault, for he seemed about to step over a steep rock, where nothing could have saved him, when my voice checked him, and he took the right turn.

Arrived on the shores of the river we had another difficulty, for our inexperienced eyes could nowhere discover the ford. The water in a broad stream came rushing and foaming by, with strength sufficient to have swept us far down, where it would have been impossible to land, the cliffs on each side, rugged and lofty, rising precipitously from it. Three or four times we essayed to cross, plunging in up to our saddle-girths: at last we reached an island, but the water on the other side was deeper than before. To swim the river was not a pleasant alternative, but we could discover no other way of crossing; so returning to the main land, we rode along the shore to find the foot-marks of any horses which might have preceded us. No human being had appeared to assist us, and in desperation we were once more about to try our fortunes in the foaming flood, when we heard what sounded like the loud croak of a raven, and looking

up we saw Josè descending the cliff. He knew the ford, it appeared; for without hesitation he rode his mule into the stream, we following after, on what appeared to be a narrow ledge of rocks running across it. That it should have escaped our observation, therefore, was not at all surprising.

Dismounting on the opposite side to dry our feet, we commenced the ascent of one of the most steep, rugged, and dreary hills it has ever been my fate to climb, and to accomplish which cost two hours' incessant toil. The first part was well paved, and indeed so had been originally the whole road, but the mountain-torrents had torn up the greater part of it, throwing down the walls, and scattering their fragments over the path: sometimes having worn it several feet below its original height, it formed a channel for the waters. It was, in fact, a disgraceful example of a road allowed by neglect to fall into ruin.

Weary and hungry we toiled on, our poor beasts panting with the exertion; deep glens, and barren slopes, alone meeting our sight; not a sound of life to cheer our spirits, when suddenly the deep tone of a bell struck on our ears, breaking the stillness which reigned around. Again it sounded—and it seemed so close that we expected every instant to see the tower of some church rise before us; but on we toiled, and none appeared. "This is but a mockery of the senses!" I exclaimed, as at length reaching level ground, we urged on our steeds into a trot. The bell continued tolling in answer, but scarce so loudly as when first heard—and full a mile did we ride before

the neat church and houses of the small town of Almendra appeared before us. It boasts of two inns, on opposite sides of the praça, the landladies of which, looking from their respective windows, invited us to enter, each affirming she had fresh meat ready to dress, and boasting of various other attractions. The advantages each had to offer appeared to us so equally balanced, that we were in some doubt which to accept, when the Host with a procession of priests and ragged little boys appearing, we turned into the nearest establishment, the personal appearance of the landlady, who was young and good-looking, having inclined us towards it; whereas she of the rival estalagem was enormously fat and aged.

A flight of steps led from the stable into an upper room, on the floor of which were piled heaps of dried elderberries, and in the corners different articles of housewifery. Drawing a rickety table to a bench near the window, we spread our breakfast, merely begging for boiling water, while several people sauntered in to ask us questions. First, they took us for Spaniards, then Frenchmen; and when we assured them we were Englishmen, they much wondered what could possibly have brought us to that place. Our hostess felt assured we had come to buy her elderberries, and wished us to settle the price; declaring large quantities were sent to England to colour wine. This, we assured her, could scarcely be the case, as elder-trees flourished equally well in England. Then some thought we had come to buy wool, two men offering to bring us samples; others said almonds; when Josè

entering, appeared highly indignant at such questions being asked us.

"These senhores are neither buyers nor sellers," he growled out, "but cavalheiros, who travel over the country for their amusement, to carry home a description of it to their countrymen, and will say what a rude set of people you are if you do not let them eat their breakfast in peace." Having thus delivered himself, he desired the hostess to bring him some food.

She thereon began to laugh and talk on other subjects; the wool-sellers bowed themselves out, and we soon after strolled forth to see the church. It was built of large blocks of stone, the windows were of a style like the Elizabethan, as indeed was the edifice itself, and was by far the prettiest country church I have seen in Portugal. We passed the walls of a house, commenced a few years ago by some fidalgo, but afterwards abandoned, of handsome light stone, carved in the most beautiful and elaborate style, the top of every window being composed of a concave shell elegantly worked, but, alas! it stood in a dirty mean street, and in that remote district who was there to admire it, even had it been completed? It is in this way that large sums are expended all over the country, which might have been usefully circulating, or applied to some beneficial purpose; but, as in this case, the labour is thrown away, and the community are the losers.

On quitting Almendra, we learned, much to our satisfaction, that the long ascent we had just surmounted was the last in our route, and that perfectly

level ground was alone before us. We were pushing on, in the hopes of reaching Almeida before dark, Josè grumbling declaring it to be impossible, when we overtook a gentleman on a fine strong mule, and passed him. After exchanging a few words with Josè, he rode up to us, saying that he heard we were going to Almeida, and assuring us that we should find the gates shut on our arrival; at the same time so politely and kindly pressing us to stop therefore at his house, a short distance only out of our road, that we were most happy to accept his invitation. Our new friend, Senhor Daniel d'Almeida, was a man advanced in years, but hale and strong. He told us that during the Peninsular war he had been in the Commissariat department, where he had commenced making a fortune, at present not to be despised; that the house to which he was about to conduct us was a small one, unworthy to receive us; that he had a much larger one somewhere else, but that this was well situated for carrying on trade. We had jogged on for a time, having some difficulty in making our horses keep up with his mule, when we observed directly before us a high conical hill, surmounted by ruined towers and walls.

"That is Castel Rodrigo," he observed, "a noted place, and well worthy a visit; now, Senhores, if you are inclined, I will lead you round that way, while your arrieiro goes directly home to announce our coming."

The plan exactly suited us, so towards the ancient fortress we bent our way. The hill on which it stands rises with a graceful sweep directly out of a wide-

extended plain from the east, while a chain of hills runs off from it towards the west. Before us was a highly-cultivated piece of ground, full of orchards, fields, and gardens, and at the very base of the hill was a fountain of Moorish architecture, towards which women were descending with pitchers on their heads to supply the town with water. A pathway led us directly up the barren hill, in front of two circular towers, with walls of the most massive thickness. Though composed of small stones, the cement used in their construction was so powerful, that the upper parts which had fallen still adhered together in vast fragments, and looked as if they might have been re-fitted into their former positions. These towers widened towards the base. Others appeared at intervals round the walls of the town, which were circular, and the hill in most places was either scarped away at their base, or composed of precipitous rocks.

Dismounting from our horses, within the walls we examined a fine reservoir still full almost to the brim with rain-water, to which steps led down. It had never been roofed. Two doorways opened into it, which once contained iron gates, for the marks where they had fitted still remained in the stone. In front was a large trough for cattle to drink at, the water having been used for such purposes probably, except when the fortress was besieged. There were numerous houses still standing, which shewed marks of great antiquity. Altogether Castel Rodrigo affords specimens of the most ancient architecture I have seen in the country.

Leading our horses through the narrow streets,

we fastened them to a gate, while we went to explore the ruins of a building of considerable magnitude, which our friend assured us had been a palace, of whom he knew not. It was, to whoever it belonged, a most splendid position for a residence, commanding a lovely view of the plain, and mountains beyond the Douro; but from the freshness of the stucco on the walls, the arched roof of some part being entire, we were led to believe that it belongs to a time many centuries later than the outer towers. This town was occupied by part of a division of the British army, the greater number being in winter cantonments in the plain below; and some large tower or citadel had been pulled down to form a hospital for the sick on a neighbouring hill.

In the centre of the town is a modern church, and our friend now led us into a mansion hard by, and introduced us to the vicar and his two sisters, specimens of good nature and obesity. Taking us into the drawing-room, they put before us a variety of the most refreshing fruit, such as water-melons and grapes, and also some cakes made by their own fair hands. I would not be ungrateful for his civility, but I cannot resist the desire of giving an outline of the vicar. In height he was several inches under five feet, his width being nearly the same; his head, which was the size of a prodigious pumpkin, and flattened, contained a pair of the most enormous eyes I ever saw; and instead of intellectuality, every feature beamed with good humour. Much happier was he, doubtlessly, in that remote position, devoid of the higher attributes

of the mind, which would only have suggested wants he could not satisfy, and made him probably discontented with his lot. A round jacket, and a pair of loose trowsers, composed the chief part of his attire. The ladies bore to him a strong family likeness, for had they been dressed in his attire, or he in theirs, it would have been difficult to have discovered the difference.

Wishing farewell to the worthy vicario and his family, we descended the hill towards Figuera, the name of the village in which our friend's house was situated. To our right, surrounded by woods and fields, was a large convent, which he told us he had bought, and intended converting into a cloth manufactory; begging us to visit it with him, and give our opinion; for that as Englishmen we must know a great deal about the matter. We assured him our opinion was of little value, as we had never even entered a manufactory in England, but that mattered not—he insisted we must visit it, though I endeavoured to impress on him my opinion, based on broad principles, that no manufactures ought to be attempted in Portugal, which England can supply at a cheaper rate than the former country can produce them. He answered that the wool would be collected from the neighbourhood without any expense of carriage, and that food was very cheap; but, yet I argued, that as Portugal employs so many foreign hands, she ought not to attempt to become a manufacturing country.

Our friend told us that meat was at a penny or three halfpence a pound, that a hare costs threepence, and

a rabbit or partridge twopence. Game is in great abundance, particularly hares, which are coursed as in the English fashion; everybody keeping greyhounds for the purpose. The country being perfectly open, they can follow them well on horseback. It was in this neighbourhood that the Duke of Wellington kept a pack of hounds; and no country in England can afford much better ground. Its only fault is, that it is too open (if that is a fault) to afford many opportunities for leaping.

A smooth green common, on which the cottagers' cattle were feeding, reminded us of the entrance to many a neat village in our own dear land; but here the likeness stopped, for the dark stone houses, and pigstye-looking streets, were, happily, unlike anything in England; though I have seen streets which had no right to boast of greater cleanliness in some villages of the sister kingdoms.

Our new friend's house was a good-sized, clean-looking edifice, far superior to any around. Leading the way to the upper story, he shewed us into a drawing-room, neatly furnished, and containing, above all things, a pianoforte. We soon afterwards heard the voices of its fair owners, welcoming their father's return, in the room adjoining to the one in which he had left us. We had told him we liked fruit, so in a few minutes a profusion was brought in, with wine, of which we, in courtesy, were obliged to partake—no great penance, considering he cut several fine melons, to select the best, and that the wine was

superior to any I have ever tasted at the houses of Portuguese. Two black-eyed daughters next followed, to do the honours of the tea-table, for our host was under the erroneous impression all the time that we had dined at Almendra. One young lady then played several pieces of music very well on the piano, and some valzes, to which we persuaded her sister to dance, till we were all tired out. Supper was then announced in the next room, containing, besides the table, the place of repose of some of the family. But oh that supper! Little did our friends know how much it cost us to eat it! what visions of indisposition and night-mare each succeeding dish of which we were pressed to partake conjured up! At last, when the concluding dish—roast pork—appeared, our sense of the courtesies of life could not overcome the dread of consequences; and placing one hand over our plates, and the other on the region of the body threatened with the infliction, ungrateful that we were! we declared we had done our best, and could do no more. In truth, our feelings were akin to those which induced the Lady Mayoress to answer one of the ministers of state at a civic feast, "Please your lordship, *I'm full.*" The rest of the family seemed surprised at the delicacy of our appetites, so despicable when compared with theirs. A few glasses of our host's delicious wine prevented the dreaded evil, and we slept soundly on two very comfortable beds, placed in alcoves adjoining the sitting room, curtains having hidden them before from view. Judging

by certain articles of dress hung up in the alcoves we had strong reason to suspect that we had usurped the young ladies' dormitories.

Our fair hostesses were up at an early hour to make tea, having partaken of which, we bid them farewell, with a grateful sense of their courtesy, and rode forth with their father on our way to Almeida. Our friend accompanied us about two miles, as far as the convent he had purchased, and intended to convert into a manufactory. Here we dismounted to examine, at his request, the capabilities of the edifice, but were completely at fault when we found that his plan was to give every weaver a separate room wherein to erect his loom, and where he and his family should reside—the cells of the monks answering exactly for the purpose. There are, I believe, no large manufactories in the country, each weaver working in his own house the time he thinks fit, and being paid according to the quantity of cloth he makes. The convent was in a sadly ruinous state, and as we walked through the spacious corridors, we were in some fear lest the roof should fall in and crush us. In the centre was a fine quadrangle, many of the apartments were large and lofty, with a good view from the windows, and the church was a handsome edifice, also falling into decay. Our friend told us he intended fitting up one part of the building, and partitioning it off as a residence for himself and family. If he puts his plans into execution he will certainly be able to boast of a very complete manufacturing establishment. The convent lands are also

extensive, and promise, if properly cultivated, to yield a large return.

"But," said he, "what we want here are hands to till our fields. The thousands and thousands of acres you see stretched out before you are many of them in a state of nature, others but partially cultivated, and might be made to yield many times the produce they now do by a proper system of agriculture. Yet, alas! nobody here can afford to lay out money on the land—they cannot even make hedges and ditches—all they do is to plough and sow a small portion, and wait for the crops nature returns. Now I intend by degrees, as I have money to spare, to cultivate all this wild ground near us, and hope in a few years to be well repaid."

When I hinted at the danger of expending much money on convent property, which might be some day reclaimed by its former proprietors, he said he had no fears of the kind, and that he considered it as secure as any other property. "The monks have had their day, and Portugal is sick of them," he observed. "Under no form of government will they be tolerated."

To supply the want of population on the frontier, I proposed that the Portuguese government should make an application to England for a few thousands of Irish Catholics, giving to each man a certain portion of ground, as his own property; and I doubt not numbers would be glad to accept the offer. Here they would enjoy the free exercise of their religion, and they would have abundance of work, in a delicious

and healthy climate, with better food than they can now obtain. Ireland would be relieved of a part of her superabundant population, and Portugal would gain an accession to her strength in a proportionate increase. An active hardy race, which she so much requires, would quickly bring her fields into cultivation, and enable her to perform the many proposed public works, which she has not at present sufficient hands to complete. Portugal would decidedly gain, for they would not only produce food for themselves, but for many times their own number. England also would benefit in other ways. Instead of sending them as emigrants at a great expense across the Atlantic, many to find their way to the United States, in four or five days they might be landed on the shores of Portugal, and when there, though no longer British subjects, there being a commercial and friendly alliance between the two countries, they would consume a much larger portion of her manufactures in time of peace, and by giving strength to the kingdom which had adopted them, would make her a far more useful ally in time of war.

I here state my proposition crude as it was then made; for though I think this plan, with concomitant regulations, would be beneficial to the country, I do not suppose that there is the slightest chance of its being adopted.

I have given the above sketch of our hospitable friend and his domestic circle, to exhibit to my readers a class of society not hitherto described by me—the trading class—which are every day improving in edu-

cation, and rising into importance in the country. One of his sons was a student at Coimbra; another remained at home to assist him in his business; and two, he told us, were merchants in the Brazils.

Expressing our thanks for his kindness, we bade him farewell at the gate of the convent. As we were mounting our horses, he called to a tall, lank being, in the dress of a labourer, who was sauntering about, desiring him to come up and speak to his countrymen, and to accompany us to a spot where several tracks branched off. As the poor fellow walked by our side, to our surprise he answered us with some hesitation in broken English, making use, however, of such expressions as none but an Englishman would think of. He told us that in his youth he had been brought up to no trade, spending his time in fishing and looking after game—in other words, that he had been a poacher; that he then enlisted in the "Queen's Own," with which regiment he served some thirteen years, and with them came to the Peninsula, and was present in several actions. In Portugal he married a native, and, I suspect, tempted by the abundance of game in the part of the country where we found him, deserted. He had lived there thirty years; for fifteen of which he had not spoken to an Englishman till he met us.

It was most interesting to converse with the man; for it was like meeting a person wrecked on some desert island, or in some far-distant country; so completely ignorant was he of all that was going forward in the world. "Is England at war now, Sir?" sounded

strange in our ears. He was a Devonshire man, and had many relations, but he never heard from them, nor had he ever sent to let them know he was alive.

Though an oldish man, and suffering from sickness, he walked with the upright air of a soldier; his eye brightening as he narrated some of his sporting exploits. Pointing to a hill on our right, he told us that one winter he had killed eight wild boars there, by watching at night concealed behind a rock, with his gun ready, till they passed by to feed on the plains. Hares and partridges he had killed without number, as had his son, who he, with much pride, boasted was the best sportsman in the neighbourhood; a chip of the old block, though born under another sky, who had killed two wild boars in one night, and brought them home in triumph. His accounts so excited us, that we were much inclined to turn back and spend a few days at Figuera, for the sake of accompanying him in a sporting expedition. He had evidently not thriven in the country, and was now working as a bricklayer in a field belonging to the convent.

A man of his character seldom manages to succeed in life, as many examples I have encountered prove. Giving him a piece of money to drink our healths, we shook the poor fellow's hard hand, and galloped over the plain along the track he indicated towards Almeida.

SKETCH XXVI.

Ciudad Rodrigo.

Agreeable Riding across a turf-covered Plain. The Fortress of Almeida. Was captured by the French in 1810, and subsequently retaken by the British. Its more recent Fortunes. Brief Stay at Almeida. Wretched Inn, but kind Hostess. Cross the Turones into Spain. Pass the Fortress of La Conception. Village of F..entes Onoro. The Country hereabouts the Scene of a desperate Conflict. Stirring Incidents. Striking Contrast in the Character and Dress of the Spaniards and Portuguese. Horrors consequent on Warfare. Economy of a Spanish Farm-house. The Fortress of Ciudad Rodrigo. The Town bears evidences of the fearful Siege it sustained. Pursue the Road to Salamanca. Vast Herds of Cattle. Night overtakes us. Stop at Martin del Rio.

A BROAD plain, with here and there an isolated rocky mound, extends along the whole eastern part of the province of Beira, from the banks of the Douro to the Serra d'Estrella; the small stream of the Turones forming here the only boundary-line between Portugal and Spain.

Along this plain, for the distance of three leagues from Figuera, we now gaily trotted, over the smoothest softest turf possible, the recollection that our steeds had a long journey before them alone preventing our urging them into a gallop; yet none but those who have been cooped up for many months among steep and rocky mountains can fully appreciate our feelings.

"Yes, yes!" I exclaimed, "I can now participate in the wild intoxicating sensations of delight which the Arab escaping from the foe must feel, when he once more mounts his gallant barb, and scours the desert. Ah! ah! what then can outstrip him? what so fleet as he, as, shrieking with mad joy, he bends his neck to the long flowing mane of his steed, whose hoofs seem scarce to touch the ground, whence rise those circling eddies of light dust!"

While yet far off we espied the green ramparts and the lofty church-tower of Almeida rising from out of the plain. The ground over which we passed was in a few places carelessly cultivated, but more generally it was a wild common; for many miles scarce a track turning off across it either to the right or left.

Within cannon-range we came upon a battery, thrown up across the road, when the place was invested by the troops of the Ministerial party; the Baron de Bom Fim, who had revolted with several regiments, having taken refuge within its walls.

The fortress of Almeida is considered one of the strongest on the frontiers of Portugal, and was successively occupied by the French and English during the Peninsular War, and several severe engagements

took place in its neighbourhood. It is situated to the north of the Coa, on a mound rising slightly from the plain, and is regularly constructed with bastions, ravelins, a deep ditch, and a covered way; there being no high ground within cannon-shot from which it can be commanded.

The short account given by Napier is highly interesting of its capture by the French in 1810, at the very time Lord Wellington, who was close at hand, was about to relieve it.

"Colonel Cox was governor, and his garrison, composed of one regular and two militia regiments, a body of artillery and a squadron of cavalry, amounted to about four thousand men. The fortress was at this time in an extremely defective state, the ramparts were too high for the glacis, and from some near ground on the side of the attack the bottom of the ditch might be seen. An old square castle built on a mound in the centre of the town contained three bomb-proof chambers, the doors of which were not secure; but with the exception of some damp casements in one bastion, there was no other magazine for the powder. Such was its state when besieged by Massena. On the 11th the trenches were begun under cover of a false attack, and in the morning of the 26th (the second parallel being commenced) sixty-five pieces of artillery, mounted in ten batteries, opened at once. Many houses were soon in flames, and the garrison was unable to extinguish them; the counter-fire was however briskly maintained, little military damage was sustained, and

towards evening the cannonade slackened on both sides; but just after dark the ground suddenly trembled, the castle bursting into a thousand pieces, gave vent to a column of smoke and fire, and with a prodigious noise the whole town sunk into a shapeless ruin! Treason or accident had caused the magazines to explode, and the devastation was incredible.

"The ramparts were breached, the greatest part of the guns thrown into the ditch, five hundred people were struck dead on the instant, and only six houses left standing; the stones thrown out hurt forty of the besiegers in the trenches, and the surviving garrison, aghast at the horrid commotion, disregarded all exhortations to rally. Fearing that the enemy would take the opportunity to storm the ramparts, the governor beat to arms, and running to the walls, with the help of an artillery officer fired off the few guns that remained; but the French shells fell thickly all night, and in the morning of the 27th two officers appeared at the gates, with a letter from Massena offering terms."

Cox, with determined bravery, was on the point of refusing the Prince of Essling's offer, in the hopes of being relieved by Lord Wellington, when a mutiny, headed by a traitor in the fortress, broke out, and he was finally compelled to make a conditional surrender. The militia retired to their homes, while he with the regular troops remained prisoners of war.

The French were again compelled to evacuate the fortress after the battle of Fuentes Onoro; General Brennier, with admirable skill and courage, after de-

stroying the principal bastions, and most of his guns, cutting his way at midnight through the British picquets, and escaping to the main army.

The events which led to its late military occupation are briefly as follows: The Baron de Bom Fim, a general officer of high repute, and at one time prime minister of Portugal, had formed a strong opposition in parliament to the present ministerial party under Costa Cabral; but finding himself constantly defeated by the superior talent and sagacity of his rival, he organized a conspiracy throughout the country to overthrow him. The minister becoming acquainted with the plans and persons of the conspirators, apprehended several both in Lisbon and Oporto. The Baron made his escape towards Almeida, and being joined on the way, by several regiments he had secretly gained over, he threw himself into that fortress. Here holding out magnificent promises to his party, he was received; assuring them that the whole country would declare in favour of the cause he advocated, and that he should quickly march out again in triumph.

Although there is no doubt that throughout the kingdom he had many partizans, a few guerillas only took up arms, and one or two other regiments in remote positions declared for him; the remainder, sick of domestic strife, quietly awaited the result.

As soon as the news of what had happened at Almeida reached Lisbon the minister dispatched a strong force to invest the place, but the battering train having to be sent up the Douro to Lamego,

and thence across the mountainous country we ourselves had just passed, many weeks elapsed before the siege could be commenced. In the mean time, the revolters being well supplied with money, provisions were plentifully introduced into the town. The garrison indeed made daily excursions towards the Spanish frontier, on which side none of the besiegers were posted; the hostile troops wisely taking the greatest care not to come in contact with each other.

At last the guns arrived, and some batteries were opened, the fortress then returned their compliments; but fortunately few casualties occurred on either side; the besiegers waiting to see if the garrison would capitulate without the effusion of blood, the latter hoping every day to hear of some demonstration made in their favour. The country fortunately remained quiet, and Bom Fim therefore, with all the officers who had joined him, galloped out of the town, reaching the Spanish frontier in safety: the troops capitulating, were distributed among other regiments, and the kingdom has since enjoyed tranquillity. Bom Fim and his followers first went to Ciudad Rodrigo, where they were deprived of their arms, and afterwards proceeded further into the interior. They were however, a short time ago, discovered in forming a fresh conspiracy to overthrow Costa Cabral, and by his representations to the Spanish government they have been banished as prisoners of state to the island of Majorca.

Whatever might have been the causes of complaint urged by the Baron de Bom Fim and his party

against Costa Cabral, he was highly culpable in appealing to arms, and running the hazard of again introducing the horrors of civil war into the land. That he ever contemplated proceeding to extremities, I do not for a moment suppose: he probably expected that once having raised his standard, his friends would flock round it, and that Costa Cabral seeing his own party outnumbered, would quietly resign, as other ministers, on former occasions, had done.

That such an occurrence as I have described could take place is most unfortunate for the country, yet it speaks greatly in favour of the Ministerialists, that so much leniency was shewn towards the party who failed in their aims; and however much strangers may be inclined to sneer at the length of the siege, and its bloodless termination, I would far rather that such was the case, than that the two parties, composed not only of countrymen, but of relations and personal friends, should have uselessly destroyed each other. It must be looked on, indeed, as having been a diplomatic warfare, rather than in any other light.

Yet when will Portugal know her true interests? When will she learn that by internal peace and unity only—that by every man energetically exerting his talents—she can ever hope to become a happy and prosperous country? It needs no prophet to foretel that if she persists in the course she has for so many years past pursued, her irretrievable ruin will be the consequence.

Unquestioned we rode partly round the town, be-

neath its frowning batteries; unquestioned we entered its outer gates, the tread of our horses' hoofs sounding hollow on its decaying drawbridge. The second gate was passed, yet not a soldier did we meet. That fortress, once the scene of so much military display, was now almost abandoned, and without encountering a human being, except a few children, we reached the estalagem of Senhora Bonefacia, just within the ramparts.

We had been led to believe that Almeida was a considerable place, and were consequently not a little disappointed in finding the greater number of the houses of a most mean and wretched appearance—our inn rather worse than the rest.

Entreating our old landlady to prepare us some food, we sallied forth to present our passports at the police-office, and to procure passes, as safeguards for our horses, each of which cost us three testoons. The use of the latter was to prevent their being seized by the Portuguese custom-house officers, no horses being allowed to go out of Portugal for sale; and in Spain, that they might not be taken for military service. The chief of the police was excessively polite, although as evidently no travellers had passed that way since the commencement of his administration, he kept us a considerable time in drawing out the necessary documents. Our next business was to get Spanish money in exchange for Portuguese coin, which we did, at a remarkably large and well-furnished shop of cloth and cotton goods. The contents of this shop, which was larger than those in Oporto, supplied not only the in-

habitants of the town, but the Spanish smugglers, who come here to purchase goods to transport across the border; a task of neither difficulty nor danger, I suspect.

The town contains a prison of considerable size, a church with a high square tower, and two praças, with several narrow streets.

As we discovered no attractions to detain us, we returned to our inn. The best room in the house contained a table and two chairs, one wanting a back, the other a leg; the former fell to my share, the latter to R——'s, who managed most scientifically to balance himself on the three remaining ones, while we eat our mid-day meal.

I must not pass over Senhora Bonefacia—such was really her name — without further mention; for though her inn was a very bad one, she herself was a very good old woman, her solicitude for our welfare deserving our utmost gratitude; nor did she, that I recollect, demand even so much as usual in payment for our accommodation. She appeared to entertain no very high opinion of the world in general, and more especially of the Spaniards.

"Ah! meus Senhores," she said, "you are going among a very bad set of people, who will rob you on every side—among cheats, rogues, and vagabonds; but the women—they are most to be dreaded—trust them in no way: they will caress only for the sake of deceiving. Ah! they are wicked indeed!"

We promised to be carefully on our guard, and thanked her for her cautions. She said the people of the town were far from satisfied with the behaviour of

the Baron de Bom Fim, who had exposed them to so much danger, and then deserted them. She affirmed that six inhabitants were killed by the fire of the besiegers, and that two artillerymen alone suffered of the military by the bursting of one of their own guns; no other soldiers on either side having lost their lives. Several of the houses also were destroyed by the explosion of shells. We were much edified by the old lady's piety, when she informed us, that though those on each side of her inn had severely suffered, yet, through the beneficent protection of her patron saint, she had escaped free from all injury, and that she had therefore vowed to offer at his shrine a quarter of the proceeds of the rent which the farrier, who lived on the ground-floor of the house, paid her for one year.

This may be called superstition—so it is, doubtless—and by which, too, a certain class of persons benefit. On their shoulders therefore let the responsibility and blame rest. But it was such superstition as could not raise a smile on our lips; for the poor old woman fully believing a miracle had been wrought by the intercession of her saint, viewed it as a duty to shew, to the utmost of her means, her sense of the favour vouchsafed. Judging from the paucity of travellers who were likely to abide at her inn, those means were small indeed. But enough of Senhora Bonefacia! Most unwillingly did we waste much precious time beneath her favoured roof, while the said farrier was shoeing our steeds in the English fashion, he assured us; and badly indeed he did it too, as we soon discovered to our cost.

At last by three o'clock in the afternoon we were *en route*, and passing through the gates, without let or hinderance we rode down the gentle slope from the fortress, scarcely remembering to give one parting glance at its grass-grown walls.

After proceeding about a mile, we descended a few feet only to the shallow stream of the Turones, the water not being much above our horses' fetlocks, and in an instant were on Spanish ground.

We were at once reminded of the change by seeing a few paces further, on the sloping banks of the stream, a man ploughing, whose high leggins, broad leathern belt, and large slouched hat, bespoke him to be a son of Spain; so different in costume and appearance to the Portuguese countryman. The latter would have taken off his hat, and wished us with a blessing a pleasant journey: this man merely stared for an instant, and then continued his occupation, ashamed apparently of having bestowed so much attention on strangers.

Close to the Turones we passed on our right the small Spanish fortress of La Conception, situated on a slightly rising ground, and constructed on the same plan as Almeida. It was apparently abandoned, for we saw no signs of life within its dark gloomy walls. After riding a little way we crossed over some rough stony ground, having the stream of Das Casas below us, on the banks of which where we were, and extending further to our right to the village of Fuentes Onoro, was fought one of the most desperate and dangerous actions in which the Duke of Wellington

was ever engaged. I wish I had space to give a full account of the battle, but I cannot resist mentioning a few incidents in it.

The Allies, who were engaged in the blockade of Almeida, then in possession of the French, were posted on the table-land between the Turones and Das Casas, the left at Fort Conception, and the right in the village of Fuentes Onoro, and extending some way beyond to Nava d'Aver; the French, under Massena, having two days before marched out of Ciudad Rodrigo.

The beautiful village of Fuentes Onoro is built chiefly at the bottom of the ravine, but a ruined chapel and a few cottages standing on a height, overlook one end of it. It had hitherto escaped all injury, although occupied alternately for above a year by both sides. "Every family was well known to the light division," says Napier. "Deep therefore was their regret to find that the preceding French troops had pillaged it; leaving only the shells of houses where three days before a friendly population had been living in comfort. This wanton act was so warmly felt by the whole army that eight thousand dollars were afterwards collected by general subscription for the poor inhabitants."

It is said truly that war brings many noble qualities into play. Such an action was worthy of Britain's gallant soldiers, and I am happy to have here an opportunity of again recording it. It shews that the mild virtue of charity was not obliterated in their bosoms by the horrors of warfare.

During the battle the right wing of the Allies was turned, and Captain Ramsay's horse-artillery was cut off and surrounded: the British infantry stood firm, receiving the attacks of the French cavalry, while Colonel Lamotte was taken fighting hand to hand with General Charles Stewart at the head of the British cavalry, amounting only to 1000 troopers, who were however compelled to retire behind the light division. "Immediately after this," says Napier, "a great commotion was observed among the French squadrons; men and officers closed in confusion towards one point, where a thick dust was rising, and where loud cries, the sparkling of blades, and the flashing of pistols, indicated some extraordinary occurrence. Suddenly the multitude was violently agitated; an English shout arose, the mass was rent asunder, and Norman Ramsay burst forth at the head of his battery, his horses breathing fire, and stretching like greyhounds along the plain, his guns bounding like things of no weight, and the mounted gunners in close and compact order protecting the rear." Brilliant indeed was the action, and brilliantly is it described; for I have never read an account which brings more perfectly the whole scene before my eyes. I fancy I can hear the cheers of the British, the execrations of the French, the sharp report of pistols—can see the flashing of the bright blades, and the horse-artillery, amid clouds of dust and smoke, dashing over the plain. On the very scene of strife the illusion is perfect.

Lord Wellington was now compelled to change

his position. All this time a fierce battle was raging in Fuentes Onoro, several turns of fortune occurring. "At one time the fighting was on the banks of the stream, and amongst the lower houses; at another, upon the rugged heights, and round the chapel, and some of the enemies' skirmishers penetrated completely through towards the main position; but the village was never entirely abandoned by the defenders; and in a charge of the 71st, 79th, and 88th regiments, led by Colonel M^cKinnon against a heavy mass which had gained the height, many of the French fell. In this manner the fight lasted until evening, when the lower part of the town was abandoned by both parties, the British maintaining the chapel and crags, and the French retiring a cannon-shot from the stream." Each claimed the victory; the French, because they turned the right flank of the Allies; the British, because the village of Fuentes was successfully defended, and because the blockade of Almeida was maintained.

Marmont, who succeeded Massena, then withdrew his army towards Salamanca, while the allied forces remained to guard the frontiers of Portugal. The Lusitanian legion in this action behaved with the greatest gallantry.

After passing the fortress of La Conception, the road being little more than a wild track, we entered the frontier village of Spain, where we inquired for the custom-house, to procure the necessary pass for our horses. We were accordingly directed to a neat small cottage, which we found occupied by a most polite old lady, who begged us to enter, saying her son would

soon make his appearance, and arrange the necessary documents. A young man at last arrived, a true Spaniard, grave and courteous, who, not without difficulty, made out some papers which he seemed to consider would answer our purpose. It was evidently the first time he had been so engaged; but by means of our Portuguese passes, and our hints, he at last succeeded. We had left Josè with the baggage some way behind; but the officer informed us he was not obliged to examine it, so after paying a peseta for our pass, we rode out of his court-yard, guided by a fine buxom damsel, whom he sent to shew us the cottage of the chief of the police.

Pointing it out to us at a distance, our fair conductress tripped off, and on our inquiring of an old man, whom we took for a peasant, if such was the residence of the chief of police, "Si, Senōr," he answered, placing his hand on his heart; "I am he before you."

After we had expressed our satisfaction at having made the acquaintance of so illustrious a person, he led us into a court-yard, and requesting us to be seated on a bench beneath the porch in front of his cottage, he retired within to sign our passports. He was habited in knee-breeches, with black stockings, and buckles to his shoes, a vest without a collar completely open in front, exposing a highly-worked linen shirt, with large lace ruffles on his wrists, a short black cloak, and a broad-brimmed low-crowned hat, from beneath which his long white locks hung down, completed his picturesque and antique attire. He was

evidently a gentleman of the old school; for I saw few afterwards whose appearance and manners struck me so much: perhaps it was from his being one of the first specimens I met that I so much admired him.

So strange did all the people appear, so unlike those of the country I had left, that at first I could scarcely divest myself of the idea that they all had dressed up to take some part in a theatrical representation. Their generally immoveable countenances, and a certain swaggering strut in their walk, gives them a very theatrical air; their sonorous language, deeply enunciated, increasing the illusion. I do not know whether I am paying a compliment to the mimics of the stage at the expense of the inhabitants of Leon, but the mode in which Harley straddles off the stage when he is acting the part of a peasant-lover, is exactly the way all the lower orders walk, having apparently considerable difficulty in keeping up their small-clothes.

In the shade on one side of the porch before the cottage sat a tailor on a low stool, employed in his calling—making or mending a pair of breeches, while an old lady, apparently the wife of the police-officer, endeavoured to prevent a pig from straying through the gate we had left open, having fastened our horses on the outside; she at intervals asking us sundry questions as to our country and destination. We were bidding farewell to the old gentleman, when Josè arrived, so we continued without delay on our journey.

Josè had now become quite an altered being. His insolent bearing to the people on the road had changed into the most servile politeness; his bows

both to the right and left were numberless, and every phrase he uttered he commenced with, "Have the extreme kindness to inform me—or to do so and so." We, too, benefitted by the change; for he extended his courtesy to us also, not, however, to his beloved mule, who came in for all his curses, and a greater share of blows, whenever he lost his temper. Scarcely had we left the village, when crossing a stream, I believe the Das Casas, R——'s horse cast a shoe, exactly in the middle of it. Here was an accident likely to cost us no slight inconvenience, for the chances were many against our finding a farrier before we reached Ciudad Rodrigo, at all events, one who could make a good shoe; so we set to work to fish it up, much amused by the strange light in which Josè viewed the misfortune. I at first, indeed, suspected him of having induced the farrier of Almeida to put the shoe on slightly, that it might come off and prevent our proceeding farther than he thought fit; but I believe I condemned him unjustly, and that no one but the latter, as being a clumsy rascal, was to blame.

First thrashing his mule as a hint that it should behave itself, and not roll in the water, he commenced feeling in the mud for the shoe. "Now none but the demonio could have taken off the shoe in this place—he's always doing mischief, is the demonio: why could not he let us alone for once in a way? oh the demonio! the demonio! d—— the demonio!" was the chief burden of his plaint.

At last, by the aid of our good genius—for as Josè certainly did not call upon his patron-saint, it was not

by his aid—the shoe was recovered; and leading our horses a short distance, we reached a small village. Here, fortunately, was a blacksmith who could shoe a horse, so he did R——'s, and very well too. While he was performing his task, we drank some light nice-flavoured wine, much superior, we thought, to that of Portugal. We amused ourselves also by talking to several peasants, chiefly women, who had come to look at the strangers. They were the handsomest we met during our short trip through Spain. One old woman said that a countryman of ours, a military officer, had some time before been lodging at her cottage, and that he had left his name with her, which she wished to shew me. Setting off, she returned with the card of Colonel Badcock, whom I formerly knew during the siege of Oporto, and who has given an interesting account in his journal of the occurrences which he witnessed at that time, and during the civil war in Spain. He was one of the officers appointed by our government to report the military operations of the contending parties. The colonel is an highly-esteemed officer, and one who has suffered severely for his country, having received wounds in every limb, so that it is surprising he can undergo the fatigue and exhibit the activity he does. I used frequently to ride with him round the lines of Oporto, when his accounts of many a desperate fight highly interested me. What brought him to this place I know not, except, as I suspect, to revisit the theatre of those glorious battles where British bravery, coolness, and skill, triumphed over the mighty legions of France. I should earnestly

recommend all young officers to follow Colonel Badcock's example, and with Napier's and other accounts of the great duke's exploits in their hands, to visit all his battle-fields, to mark well each spot, to consider why it was attacked, why defended; and in their mind's eye to people each height, each wood, the wide-extended plain,—indeed, to "fight the battles o'er again."

Such, I think, would be a good method, certainly a very interesting one, of improving their knowledge of their art, and preparing them to act on an emergency; for though I am an advocate for peace, and should rejoice to see war (notwithstanding that it is a most noble trade) banished for ever from the world, yet I would be strong to repel an attack, and to let our foes know that we are not to be insulted with impunity.

Wars, rapine, and murder, may cease some day: cities stormed and sacked, villages burned, whole countries ravaged and laid waste, may be alone heard of in the pages of history; but it will be only when all men grow far more wise, virtuous, and noble, than they are at present. War! glorious war! one's heart throbs at the thought of the heady fight, when man meets man with equal weapons and they strive for honor and for life! It is drivelling sentimentalism to say that it is not a noble game—the stakes played for are great—the utmost loss but life:—but—ay, that but!—it is the effects of war which make even the warrior's heart sicken, the eye turn aside with horror. Once smiling villages heaps of ruins, their

inhabitants murdered—worse than murdered—and houseless wanderers; the ripe corn, their intended food, trampled down or carried off to supply their foes; rich cities sacked, the bodies of the peaceful citizens strewing the streets; wide districts abandoned and laid waste by friends, to delay the march of the foe; the widow's and orphan's tears;—even such scenes as I have witnessed—they make one pray that war may cease,—they beseechingly call on every one of us to suffer much, before we have recourse to that dread cause of so much human misery.

Naval warfare I look upon in quite another light. Those only engage in it whose profession it is to fight. Contending fleets betake themselves far away from the haunts of men, upon an element where they can do no injury except to each other; and, like two brave knights of old, they fight till one can fight no longer.

But we must return to our route towards Ciudad Rodrigo. We had for some time, against our inclinations, agreed with Josè that we could not reach that famed fortress before night-fall; and on leaving the last pueblo we were fully convinced of the fact, by seeing the sun sinking low towards the horizon. We pushed on, however, though the ground was rather rugged, to reach the next village of Gallegos, which we did just at dusk; but our perplexity was considerable when we found that there was no posada in the place. We rode therefore through the lanes, inquiring if any of the cottagers were willing to afford us accommodation, and at last being recommended to apply at the house of a certain Senōr Iago, we

found him chopping wood outside his farm-yard. He eyed us narrowly with a suspicious glance, before he deigned to answer Josè's interrogatories, till at last being convinced that we were not brigands, he told us we might enter the yard. Josè's first care was to see that the stable would accommodate our steeds and himself; and finding that it would, without consulting us, he agreed to remain, we in the mean time looking round to discover the house where we were to pass the night. At last, the cheering sound of woman's kind tones struck on our ears, inviting us to enter through a low door into a building which we took for a mud-hovel. We however found ourselves, after passing through a hall, in a small kitchen to the right. All the Spanish kitchens we saw, unlike those of the Portuguese inns, are very clean and neat, and so was this one. The wood-fire was placed on some raised stone-work beneath a vast chimney and against a stone projecting a foot from the wall, painted white, with a black round mark where the flames touched it.

We were soon sociably seated about a blazing hearth, on low three-legged stools, of the same form as those called crickets in some parts of England. The family consisted of the old man and his wife, a daughter and her husband, with several little children, and four or five farm-servants, who came in to supper. We found that our hosts were respectable farmers; and though the outside of the building promised little, that the interior afforded every comfort that from the simple habits of the people they could require. The

smoke from the wood-fire inflaming our eyes, compelled us to retire to the outer room, where our younger hostess spread a clean cloth on a table scarcely two feet high, at which we sat on our three-legged stools, with a small tin lamp, such as I have before described, hung from a beam above us. A dish of stewed potatoes smoking hot, was placed before us, on which, with some excellent rye bread, some slices of fried ham, and a bottle of wine we had brought from the Douro, we fared most sumptuously.

We contemplated all the time the necessity of sleeping wrapped in our cloaks on a chest and on the luggage in this rude hall, but as everything appeared turning out most satisfactorily, we made no inquiries; determining to let affairs take their course. This is the best mode of proceeding in Spain and Portugal; the people generally do their best to give you all they possess, and you only offend them by asking for what is not in their power to bestow. Thus we, at all events, acted, and always fared well; probably better than had we troubled ourselves on the subject. José seldom failed to do us one great service, by gently insinuating to the landladies that we were persons of the most extraordinary bad taste, who had a strange aversion to their food being fried in oil. We, too, used to apologize ourselves, by attributing our want of taste to the circumstance of there being no olive-trees in our country, though there are an abundance of cows. Alio or garlic we always avoided, without offending the cooks, by a similar excuse; though doubtless they sincerely

commiserated the general bad taste of our countrymen.

Potatoes have of late years become the usual food of the poor throughout the Peninsula: the name given to them, *castanholas* (big chestnuts), shews what they have superseded. I do not mean to say that chestnuts are not eaten, but they are now used more as an additional luxury, than, as in previous years, for the foundation of the meal. I should argue therefore that the people must have a greater abundance of food than formerly, having now the potatoes, besides the chestnuts. The latter when boiled are almost as light and nutritious as the former.

Before nine o'clock we were summoned to bed, when we were not a little pleased to find that several large rooms opened out of the hall, where we were sitting, the bed-places being within alcoves in their walls. R—— was shewn into a room where the young couple and their children roosted. I was led to another chamber in which I could hear, before many minutes had passed, the old couple snoring close to me. The bed was scrupulously clean, and far more comfortable than those in the best inns in Portugal, though the sheets were of much coarser linen than those of the country we had recently quitted: the walls were whitewashed, though the ground was of clay. Directly outside my alcove was a rack well filled with crockery of the roughest manufacture, and there were several chests against the walls of the room, filled, probably, with the carefully hoarded articles of housewifery.

Everything around was in good order, clean, and neat, though coarse in the extreme—reminding me, in some respects, of a tidy English cottage, and such as one might in vain look for, I fear, among the same class of people in Portugal. I like the Portuguese far better than the Spaniards; I have more confidence in their virtue, and their valour, but the humblest cottage in Spain ought to put them to shame. The Spaniards have a very good idea of what we consider comfort and tidiness, the Portuguese peasant not the remotest approach to it: the cottage of the former is built to keep out the heat of summer, as well as the frosts of winter; that of the latter admits every icy blast, while the rays of the sun pierce through their thin roofs.

I unintentionally revenged myself on the old couple for their loud snoring by calling out to them at three o'clock that it was daylight: the old woman answered from her dormitory that it was the moonlight only shining in at the window; but I insisted that it was time to rise, as we were anxious to be off by the earliest dawn. The whole household was therefore soon in motion, while a maid-servant was dispatched to a neighbouring cottage to learn the hour; for, most inconveniently, neither R—— nor I had brought our watches. Josè was the only person not on foot. If we moved before daylight, he declared we should be robbed if not murdered also, and each time we went to the stable we found him rolled up in his horse-cloth, on a heap of straw. At last, after we had partaken of some excellent chocolate, prepared by our young hostess, such as

every cottage in Spain can afford, the silvery streaks of dawn appeared in the eastern sky, and dragging the still recusant Josè forth from his litter, we bade adieu to our worthy hosts. Their charge for the entertainment of ourselves and beasts was a little more than three pesetas, about as many shillings, nearly a quarter less than we always afterwards paid for a night's lodging. They gave us, besides, some good advice, telling us we should be asked double its worth for whatever we purchased; and such we found to be the case.

I always enjoy visiting some unfrequented place, such as the one I have described, where the inhabitants have not become vitiated by intercourse with the trading, mercenary world: it gives me a better idea of human nature, and a more kindly feeling for my race, than I too frequently experience elsewhere.

The light was just sufficient to enable us to see our way as we rode in a south-easterly direction from the village. The country through which we passed was wild, undulating, and but partially cultivated. The road led us across several small streams, that of the Azava among them, and along one or two rugged glens, of no great depth; a few husbandmen engaged in the labours of the field being the only persons we encountered. We welcomed with pleasure the warming beams of the rising sun, for the morning air struck chill and damp through our light clothing; and, regardless of Josè and our baggage, we trotted on for some miles, in the full enjoyment of unrestrained liberty.

No way of travelling is, to my taste, so delightful

as on horseback, through countries so full of romantic associations as Spain and Portugal; particularly the former. Each day one is sure to encounter some fresh adventure, and every hour one meets on the road with some amusing characters, such as Cervantes and Le Sage have so admirably portrayed. Possessing a strong horse, an intelligent friend, and a faithful servant, I should much like to travel for some months through the country; and the best advice I can give to those anxious to become acquainted with Spain, is to follow this course.

For about a league we passed over a green plain till we came in sight of the dark walls of Ciudad Rodrigo, a square castle and two church-steeples appearing above them, and the stream of the Agueda flowing at their base. Dismounting from my horse, I made a sketch, in as quick a time as possible, lest I should be observed by any of the sentinels, and taken up for a spy, as, from their doing the like thing, has occurred to two or three of my acquaintance. The Agueda is here a tolerably broad river, but shallow, running from the east towards the Douro. The southern walls of the fortress are built on some rocks of slight elevation, whose base is washed by the waters of the stream. Just below the ramparts stand two stone pillars to commemorate its glorious capture from the French; but why placed there, I know not, as the breaches were made on the west side, from a slightly elevated tableland, at a short distance off. Passing above a few cottages, we crossed a bridge of many arches, and wound

up a paved road beneath the frowning walls, so time-stained that we could scarcely distinguish them from the solid scarped rock. When we reached the western gate we were told that our baggage must go round to the eastern gate to be examined, though the passes for our horses being looked at, it was signified that we ourselves might enter; but of course we preferred attending our property, and had thus the advantage of seeing the entire outer works of the city.

To the eye of a civilian the walls of this celebrated fortress give the idea of prodigious strength, and one is surprised that even cannon-balls should be able to breach them. With the exception of the platform on the west through which the British made their approaches, the surrounding ground is a complete flat. There are a few houses at some little distance, and a large ruined church to the north. The ramparts are of great height, and the ditch broad and deep, and there is not a single route by which an invading force can approach unperceived.

Passing over a long wooden bridge, and through an outer gate, our baggage was examined by the custom-house guards, who being, unfortunately, able to read, discovered that the passes for our horses were not correct, as there were no marks mentioned by which they might be identified. While our clothes were being handled by dirty fingers, and tumbled into the dust, we stood by with philosophical composure, casting a glance to see that nothing was abstracted, but chiefly amused with the many strange figures who passed. There

were soldiers in light blue uniforms of various shapes; dark Murillo-looking men with slouched hats, and large cloaks enveloping their forms, fit characters to represent the midnight assassin; others, no less fierce, with hats set jauntily on one side, their cloaks thrown back, exposing their gay vests and worked shirts, might have been taken for daring brigands: there were priests in large shovel hats, women with baskets of fruit, and water-carriers with their donkeys, each donkey bearing four earthern jars in wicker frames fastened like panniers on his back.

While Josè proceeded to the inn, we passing over a drawbridge, and beneath a wide gate and portcullis, accompanied one of the guards to the office of the chief of police, to have the passes for our horses rectified. We were treated most politely by that functionary, who was habited in military costume; and almost overcame his Spanish gravity by telling him that our steeds were best known, one from being blind of an eye, the other from having a white face and broken knees, and that they were perfectly unfit to carry one of her majesty's troopers; nor did he require further to inspect them.

We then went to a posada at the end of the plaça, kept by an active polite landlord. It possessed some tolerable rooms with brick floors, but was not particularly clean. While breakfast was preparing, we were, for the first time in our lives, shaved by a Spanish barber, and fully did he sustain the ancient celebrity of his class, by the delightful way he performed the operation. He first placed his Mambrino's

helmet beneath our chins with hot water, and used a round strop to sharpen his rasor.

After breakfast we sallied out to view the town. We walked twice round the ramparts, which afford a fine airy promenade, and appear to be kept in the highest order; nor could we discover where the breaches were made. All the older buildings, however, told of the fearful strife it had endured, and not a house could have escaped the effects of the iron showers hurled at it: the towers of the churches were yet in ruins, the side of a cupola on the top of one being completely shot away. To the north, an aqueduct leads from some hills nearly a league off, and just below the walls, in an open space, surrounded by the straggling suburbs, are a collection of fountains fed by it. To the south are the Agueda, and the distant mountains of Gata. Were it not for these objects the view from the ramparts of Ciudad Rodrigo would be as uninteresting as could well be imagined. The associations are, however, far otherwise, to me particularly, for a short time before I had heard an account of its capture, by one who had there played a most gallant part—the then youthful leader of the forlorn hope, and who, as the meed of his valour, had received from the hand of his great chief the sword he took from the governor. I speak of Colonel Gurwood, the honoured friend of the Duke of Wellington, and whom I thought of as I stood on the spot where he mounted the first steps of the ladder of fame.

The cathedral is a handsome structure, richly

ornamented, and there are two other churches. In the south-western corner is a high square tower of great antiquity, in the buildings attached to which the governor has his residence. The streets are few, and of course narrow; the houses are built partly of large square blocks of stone, which give them a handsome appearance, and partly of brick. The only open space is the long plaça, thronged with market-people and military; and further than this I can say little of the appearance of Ciudad Rodrigo. There are about 2000 inhabitants within its walls, the garrison then consisting of about 800 men.

Our curiosity being fully satisfied, and the sight of Salamanca being our chief aim, we determined to proceed on our journey at once, so as to reach that city on the following day. At two o'clock therefore, greatly to Josè's displeasure, we rode forth from the eastern gate, furnished with a note from our landlord to a friend at Martin del Rio, assuring him we were cavaliers of the highest character, who paid their way as such. We were much amused at the tenor of the note, and at first doubted whether we should deliver it; but at last we agreed, that as civility, like most other commodities, was to be bought, we might as well secure it, though we paid for it somewhat high. Our suspicions of the purpose of the note proved in the sequel correct, and we agreed that in future we would deliver no such kind billets, or put up at the hotels their writers recommended.

A flat road led us through the suburbs, close to the aqueduct, till we reached the rocky ridge we

had seen from the ramparts, and surmounting it, we found ourselves on a vast plain, bounded on the right by the distant blue ridges of the Sierras da Francia, with those of Gata more to the south. On every other side nought met the eye but a green expanse, or woods of the sombre-coloured small Spanish oak, bearing sweet acorns, and which have exactly the appearance of olive-trees, for which indeed we at first mistook them. Immense herds of black cattle dotted the plain, fierce-looking animals, not to be counted by tens or fifties, but by hundreds or thousands, so that we could almost fancy ourselves on the pampas of South America. We also passed, at some distance further on, large flocks of goats and sheep feeding together. Though there are neither hedges, ditches, nor divisions of any sort to keep them within bounds, the shepherds and their dogs are sufficient for the purpose. These grassy plains, with the woods on them, reminded us of the scene between Don Quixote and the Carrier, where, after their combat in the meadow, as the word is translated, they seated themselves beneath some trees in perfect amity, like two gallant knights, respecting each other's courage. There was a road marked out, but on each side of it, for some hundred yards, the tracks of wheels and horses' hoofs extended on the soft turf.

We had again been forgetful of Josè, whom, as it was impossible to refrain from occasionally taking a canter on such tempting ground, we had not seen since leaving the aqueduct near Ciudad Rodrigo. We now therefore, the sun sinking low in the sky, pulled up on

a bridge at the entrance of a pueblo to await his coming.

At last he arrived, accompanied by two horsemen of most suspicious appearance. R—— and I at once agreed, that if they were by chance honest men their countenances most sadly belied them. On their heads they wore broad slouched sombreros, and from beneath that of the tallest beamed forth the most wicked pair of large rolling eyes I ever beheld; their forms also were completely enveloped in dark brown cloaks, somewhat the worse for wear; so that it was impossible to discover whether they carried arms or not. Josè did not at all appear to admire their society.

"These cavaliers say you are acting far from wisely to allow your servant and baggage to proceed alone," he growled out, as we all travelled on in company; "for though you doubtless carry all the money yourselves, it may offer a temptation to any robbers who may be wandering over these plains."

At these words the tall horseman's eyes rolled round more ominously of evil than before.

"We are much obliged for the good advice," I answered laughing; "but, in the first place, we know well enough that there are no robbers in this part of the country; in the second, we should not fear them if there were; and in the third, they would find little besides a few old clothes for their trouble. However, Senhor Josè, I beg you will let your mule keep up with us, and with these cavalieros, in whose company we shall have the pleasure of proceeding to

Martin del Rio, yet two leagues off, or you will not reach it till long after dark."

"It is but a short league hence: these gentlemen have told me so, and we shall have abundance of time," said Josè.

Again the strangers' dark eyes turned towards us with a cunning glare; and we having just made inquiries of several persons, still felt assured our intended resting-place was full two leagues off, though we did not think fit to undeceive our man. On therefore we jogged, in amicable converse with the strangers, who contrived never to get in advance: though when we trotted on their horses had no difficulty in overtaking us, at the easy ambling pace the Spanish horses are usually taught to perform. They were in truth most facetious, amusing gentlemen, equally anxious to receive as to impart information; and having given them a light for their cigars, we became on the most friendly terms, though for prudence sake we kept them always on our left side, in case they might think fit to cry "Stop!" and present a carbine at our heads. When however we had undoubtedly passed over a long league, the shades of night thickening around us, and no village had appeared in sight, Josè's trepidation and ill humour much increased, particularly when the tall stranger observed to us that Martin Del Rio was yet a league further on.

Josè soon afterwards being obliged to stop, to secure some of the luggage, the horsemen proceeded on, and he gave full vent to his sentiments. Spain

and Spaniards came in for a large share of his wrath, but especially his late friends. Rogues, vagabonds, liars, were the mildest epithets he bestowed—to deceive him in this way!—the diabo could not have done more—to persuade him to travel on at night for the sake of robbing and murdering us! "This comes of travelling in Spain, a country full of deceit and treachery. Now in Portugal we should know what we were about—if we are robbed and murdered it will serve us right, and the diabo will be pleased at his work!" he exclaimed.

Though not entering into his feelings; on the contrary being highly amused, we had no consolation to offer; for not a light glimmered before us, and dark woods were alone seen on each side of the broad road: into them he cast ever and anon suspicious glances, expecting to see the strangers issue forth, and order us to stand and deliver.

I must not omit to mention, that although the greater part of the road was simply a perfectly smooth track across the plain, whenever a stream occurred, a substantial bridge was thrown across it, or if the ground was swampy, a paved and elevated causeway ran over it; so different to the sad state of neglect in which Portugal remains in that respect.

So long did we ride on in the dark, that at last we began to suspect that we must by some chance have passed the pueblo of which we were in search, yet so calm and beautiful was the night, that we agreed it mattered little if we had yet some miles further

to ride. "I fear, after all, that our suspicious acquaintance have betaken themselves away, and that we are doomed to meet with no adventure," I observed.

"I am much obliged to you for your wishes," answered R——; "but for my part, I should prefer finding ourselves comfortably seated at the kitchen-fire, in the posada."

"What! and have no stirring adventure to relate?" I cried.

"That may be very well for you who purpose to fill the pages of a book. If we were to lose our baggage, and be tied like scarecrows to the trees, you would be amply repaid by the interest it would give your work," responded my friend. "I have no such love of romance."

"You are destitute of ambition, my dear fellow," I answered, laughing. "Think of the honour of being made the hero of my tale!—Think——" Scarcely had I uttered the words, when from behind a dark wall, which rose suddenly before us, our two acquaintance issued forth.

"*Buenas noches, caballeros;* you have loitered on the road," they said, riding up to us. Josè uttered a groan, expecting to hear the report of their pistols.

"We stopped to shew you the posada," continued the tall horseman, and we could hear him give way to a fiendish chuckle. Josè again groaned, and answered in his most courteous tone: "*Muchas gracias, Senhores*, we are going to the posada of the Provin-

ciana." "That is not the posada we go to," said the same voice. "You will find it a few paces on to the right. Good night, cavaliers;" and away they trotted, while we directed our course towards a light, we just then discovered, beaming from a cottage-window.

We learned afterwards that our friends were noted contrabandistas—worthy, honourable men in the estimation of the world—though addicted to infringing somewhat the laws of their country!—and we had strong reason to suspect, that being facetious characters, they had been amusing themselves at Josè's expense.

The posada of La Provinciana, or Biscayana, by either of which names it is known, so called from the hostess being a native of the province of Biscay, is a fair specimen of a Spanish country inn. We entered through some large gates, into a place which appeared like a court-yard, except that it was completely roofed over. On one side were the doors of several stables, capable of holding full a hundred horses; for as the Spanish muleteers travel in large bodies, three or four of which may arrive at a time, smaller stables would not be capable of receiving them; on the other side was the kitchen, the public sleeping room for the upper class of guests, and the apartments of the family. The kitchen was exactly like the one I have before described, except that it was rather larger, and very clean; the brass utensils of cookery hanging against the white-washed wall, and shining from constant bur-

nishing. The landlord was a fine, tall, independent-looking fellow, rather burly and big, as became his calling, and fully able to maintain order in his establishment. The hostess—the Biscayana—was a handsome and active woman, who seemed well to second him, although she had been an heiress, and brought him his fortune.

While we were seated on our low stools before the kitchen fire, she killed, plucked and stewed two chickens for our supper, and then undressed her children; a highly interesting sight was the latter. We were doubting whether she was about to stew one of them also, till she carried them off to bed. She made various messes for the other guests, while her tongue kept moving the whole time with a very pleasing tone.

To eat our meal we were shewn into the chief room, which at each end had two alcoves with beds in them. During the evening I went out of our dormitory to speak to Josè, whom I found in one of the vast stables, reposing in a manger near his horses. On passing through the large hall, or rather covered court-yard, I picked my way among some twenty or thirty men, sleeping in all directions on the ground, wrapped in their horse-cloths, with their saddles for pillows, ready at a moment's notice to rise and pursue their journey; and I fancy these hardy muleteers seldom indulge in more luxurious couches.

After finishing our supper R—— took possession of one of the beds, but I, not being sleepy, sat up

writing; when to my surprise I heard the voices of a woman and child, whom I discovered to be the occupants of one of the beds. The hostess had made her appearance once or twice; and at last finding I was not preparing to retire, she requested I would delay no longer, saying a lady was anxious to take possession of her couch, which she could not do till I was safely ensconced in mine. To such a request of course there was no denial, so I quickly turned into a very comfortable bed opposite to the yet unoccupied alcove. Before I had time to go to sleep, which I most strenuously endeavoured to do, I saw a veiled figure ushered in by the hostess, bearing a shaded lamp, take possession of the said dormitory; but little did I cogitate on the matter, ere, being left in total darkness, oblivion of all things present stole over my soul.

SKETCH XXVII.

En route to Salamanca. Large Herds of Swine. Singular build of the Villages. Increasing Elevation of the Country. Pueblos at Abobeda. Lovely View on approaching Salamanca. Unpromising Aspect of the City. Many of the Edifices, notwithstanding, very superb. The Modern Cathedral. The Sacristy. The Old Cathedral. The Walls and Fortifications of Salamanca. State of Feeling of the Inhabitants of the Peninsula towards the English. Depressed Condition of the Collegiate Establishments. Foundling Hospital and Orphan Asylum: solicitude for the comfort and welfare of the Inmates. The University. Library. Plaça de la Constitucion. Splendid Café. No Sympathy with Gamblers. Retire to Rest.

I was awoke by the hostess entering the chamber, and letting in a grey stream of early daylight through the single small window which the room contained, bringing at the same time a wash-hand stand, with water and towels; luxuries we had not often met in Portugal, except when asked for. Remembering the other occupants of the room, we quickly performed our toilet, when two tiny mugs of thick chocolate with some thin slices of toast, and glasses of water, were brought us. After paying the reckoning, we mounted our steeds and rode forth over the vast plain.

Mine host took his friend's hint, and charged us three dollars and a half, about seventeen shillings; giving us a further recommendation to his correspondent at Salamanca, which we took good care not to deliver.

We were truly fortunate in the weather. In the morning the air was delightfully fresh and invigorating; and during the middle of the day the sun's rays were

never oppressive. This time of the year is unquestionably by far the best suited for travelling, except that we found the hours of daylight somewhat fewer than we wished.

There was but little difference in the scenery to that we passed on the previous day—the same blue range of mountains were still visible, already apparently sprinkled with snow. Perhaps, however, the reflection of the sun on some white cliffs deceived us. On each side were also the same vast wide green pastures, or interminable woods of low oaks. Here and there a gentle elevation broke the otherwise regular line of the horizon, and pueblos scattered about in every direction shewed that the land was still the habitation of man. Near each pueblo were numerous horses and colts feeding; some of them very pretty animals. We passed also many more herds of cattle, and flocks of goats and sheep intermingled; indeed, frequently the races were evidently crossed. Still more numerous were the large herds of black swine, sufficient to create a disgust for the country in the heart of a Jew or a true follower of Mahomet. I never before saw so many together; and I should think the sweet acorn, on which they feed, must give their flesh most delicious flavour. The fields also are of greater extent than I had before seen; but how all these animals are kept away from them I know not, for the landmarks are apparently but slightly defined, and protecting fences they have none. These vast woods and pastures are all the property of individuals, or of the

neighbouring pueblos ; for, as far as I could learn, the crown possesses none of them.

The villages are built in a singular form, much like those of the settlers in the neighbourhood of the warlike Indian tribes in the western parts of America. They are completely surrounded by stockades, cattle-pens, and gardens, the houses being in the centre, their doors opening on the side furthest from the main road, the windows few and small ; in fact, formed in the best way to resist the attack of an enemy. This plan has probably been followed from the earliest times, when every succeeding year saw the country the theatre of war ; and in later days they have had, alas ! but too little cause to change it. The houses are of brick, or stone closely cemented, and if not entirely painted, are generally whitewashed round the doors and windows, which gives them a neat appearance.

The carts we saw are shaped somewhat like an English dust-cart, but with larger wheels, and the sides of much greater height. The oxen employed to draw them are truly magnificent animals, half as large again as those of Portugal. The carts also are as unlike as possible to the small heavy chariot-shaped vehicles used by the latter nation.

No diligences run between Salamanca and Ciudad Rodrigo, but we passed or overtook several light, canvass-covered, English-looking wagons, drawn by six mules, or horses, which perform the journey in a day and a half.

The face of this part of the country is remarkable.

Every three miles or so we came to a sudden rise of about thirty feet in height, like a step, extending east and west; the level then continued for the same distance, and then came another step. My theory is, that the waters of the Deluge, after washing over the rocky northern coast of the Asturias and Biscay, swept southward and westward, gradually carrying away the loose soil and sinking at the same time, made these steps, as they found a vent through the rocks of Portugal, leaving part of their rich produce in their course, and depositing the remainder to form the fertile lands which border the western coast of that country. These plains are situated as high above the sea, I should think, as any of the most elevated parts of Portugal; the barrier summits of the mountains alone being excepted. Geologists, however, possess more knowledge on this subject than I can pretend to, and perhaps can shew that I am wrong in my conjectures; so I will pursue the question no further.

After riding five leagues, we stopped to bait at the posada of Abobeda, standing alone, with the exception of a mean little venda, close to the road. A church was at a small distance, and five pueblos were within sight. Instead of the usual assurance from the hostess that she had everything in the house, she at once declared she had nothing to give us to eat; that she was a lone woman, and had no servants to send out to procure food; that we might put our horses in the stables, and might help ourselves to the corn and straw; that she would cook anything we wished, and that we might eat it in the kitchen; but that nothing

else would she do. This was not pleasant information to hungry people, so we repaired to the venda, where we found bread and wine, and some meat, I believe kid, just killed, with which we returned to the posada. The meat the old lady consented to cook, although at first highly indignant at our desiring to have no oil mixed with it. A few soft words turned away her wrath, when she sliced our meat, and boiled it, but, alas! when placed before us, our teeth could make no impression on it, and even Josè, after it had received a second stewing with oil, to suit his palate, declared he had never eaten such tough morsels. On the opposite side of the fire the muleteers and passengers of a wagon were seated round a low table at dinner. They formed a picturesque group: the gay coloured dresses of the drivers, the dark ones of the other men, their countenances bent over the table, while they helped themselves to food, and their heads ever and anon thrown back, as they poured the wine into their mouths from a skin bottle. A woman was of the party, with two lap-dogs; her tongue wagging for all the rest.

On the stone seat against the wall a stout man was seated, evidently of a higher class, habited in the usual large black cloak and broad-brimmed sombrero. We were speculating on his profession, when we saw him stir a pot boiling on the fire, and the hostess bring in a pestle and mortar, in which he compounded a mixture for a patient in the house; thus proclaiming himself a disciple of Esculapius. I had a good deal of conversation with him, and he seemed an intelligent

person, without any of the Dr. Sangrado manner, though he did declare that *Don Quixote* was a second-rate work, little thought of at present in Spain, and that there were many much better romances.

Truly, this observation of the worthy doctor's was too much in accordance with the principles of Young Spain—to despise all that their fathers venerated, to destroy all vestiges of their ancient monarchy—their only days of glory—because they have discovered that all was not right in those days. This they call liberty! this is their enlightenment! Forsooth! I would rather be the slave of an honest Turk, who reverences his Koran and puts his trust in Allah, than enjoy such liberty!

Among other things, the doctor told me that there were several cloth-manufactories in the neighbourhood, (shewing me his cloak, of very good texture, the material of which was made in one of them), and that most of the machinery had been imported from England.

Wherever I go I find proofs of the short-sighted policy of the English government in not forming a commercial treaty with the Peninsula, even at the cost of some present sacrifice; allowing the people in the mean time to become, in consequence, manufacturers themselves, and thus to be independent of us.

We had yet six leagues to perform before we could reach Salamanca, the whole distance between it and Ciudad Rodrigo being sixteen short leagues. We were much amused by hearing Josè boasting that the Spanish leagues are little more than half the size of those of Portugal—poor little leagues which one gets over in

no time. Now in some parts of his country there are leagues of such magnificent length that they take full two hours, if not more, to perform!

We met a number of countrywomen riding over the plain on donkeys, not one of which had a halter, or any incumbrance about the head, being guided entirely by the voice of the rider and a small stick she held in her hand. The heads of those carrying burdens enjoyed the same freedom; and a drove we met with empty charcoal-sacks were busily employed, as they trotted on, in picking up any green food in their path, which they could thus masticate without fear of indigestion.

When yet many miles off we could see the smoke from the hearths of Salamanca ascending high in the sky, and towards it we steered our course. At last, mounting a gentle rise, the towers of the numerous churches, convents, and colleges of that ancient seat of learning, surrounding the pinnacles and dome of its beautiful cathedral, which rose proudly above all, burst upon our sight. A very lovely spectacle it was, set off by the stream of the Tormes close below us, which here taking a bend to the north, has the appearance of a silvery lake, fringed by many graceful trees bending over its waters. We rode along the banks of the river for two or three miles, with the city in view, passing a few villas, till we reached the suburbs on the south bank, through which a fine broad road conducted us to a bridge of many arches, and by it we crossed the stream to the outer gate. We were here ordered by the guards to unload our mule, when

our luggage underwent a strict examination, which being concluded, we were permitted to proceed. Josè had on the road made acquaintance with a man on horseback, whose advice he asked as to the best hotel in the place. The man recommended the Parador del Rincon, at the same time saying the one our host at Martin del Rio had advised us to patronize was not bad. We afterwards found that the man was the brother of the master of the former, and much obliged to him were we for his advice (even though it might have been interested), as we had good reason to be pleased with the accommodation afforded us. He now sent a boy to guide us thither; and passing through several narrow streets, we reached just at dusk the said Parador del Rincon, situated in the corner of the Plaça Mayor.

The outside, like nearly all the private houses in the city, had a mean appearance; but we were agreeably surprised after passing through a court-yard, to find ourselves shewn into a large clean room, and though the floor was of brick, with two pretty French-beds, wash-hand stands, looking-glasses, sofas, tables and chairs; indeed, completely furnished to serve as a bed- or sitting-room. Then we had the nicest, most active, and pretty little girl possible to attend on us, the grand-daughter of the hostess, called Manuella. I shall not forget her smile at our mistakes, or the trouble she took to correct our faulty Castilian; though at times she could look very serious, if not sulky; and at last we came to the conclusion, from her variable temper, that she was in love—no uncommon occurrence

to Spanish maidens of sixteen; for to so many years did she own. Never did I see waiter more active in laying the table, and changing our plates, which she did for every one of the six or eight dishes placed before us; she was, in truth, like the servant-girl encountered by Coningsby and his mysterious friend at the little country-inn, fully mistress of her subject.

The different persons engaged in the hotel were, with the exception of one old woman, a servant of all work, belonging to one family. Manuella's grandmother superintended the kitchen, which was much in the French style, and her uncle, a very respectable-looking young man, was master of the hotel.

After one has been roughing it for some days, one does enjoy the luxury of a really good quiet hotel as this was; and so, indeed, on this occasion did we, wishing we could remain for a week or so to become civilized again.

The following morning, after the dark-eyed Manuella had brought us in our chocolate, with some delicate thin toast and deliciously cool water, we sallied forth to make ourselves thoroughly acquainted with the geography of the city, before we commenced sight-seeing.

Salamanca disappoints one more than any city I have ever visited. Among heaps of ruins arise magnificent structures, themselves too often giving signs of speedy decay—churches unroofed, convents dismantled, colleges deserted; the streets narrow, irregular, winding up and down hill, and dirty in the extreme; the houses shabby and small, the few of size and

apparent respectability having blank walls only towards the thoroughfares. But then, again, one is delighted with the vast and elegant cathedral, the not less beautiful church of St. Domingos, the former Jesuits' college, latterly inhabited by the Irish students, the university, the Colegio Viejo, and many other superb edifices—the latter, instead of being the oldest, appearing to be one of the newest of all; either one of them, both within and without the walls, worthy of being the pride of any city in the north of Portugal. Then there is the beautiful Plaça de la Constitucion, a perfect square, with an arcade on each side, the exterior of the buildings richly ornamented; the Plaça Mayor, and many other open spaces; the whole surrounded by walls with several beautiful gates built in the time of the Bourbons; and outside the walls is a shady avenue, the general resort of the inhabitants on the evenings of summer. Such, in a few words, is Salamanca, formerly one of the most wealthy and important seats of learning in the world, now affording education to scarcely more than six hundred students; their numbers every year decreasing, and being nearly, if not completely, deserted by those of noble birth and of title.

The first building we entered was the cathedral. It stands in an open space, the greater part entirely separated from other edifices, except the old cathedral, which, like a dwarf scarcely perceived, nestles by its side, the modern structure towering far above it. The architecture is of the most florid Gothic, with a lofty dome and highly-ornamented pinnacles; the stone of

which it is built still retaining a pure pinkish hue. The interior delighted us most. There are four aisles, two on each side of the nave, descending in height from the centre, whose lofty pillars, whence spring finely-groined arches, are formed of a collection of small delicate columns, like reeds clustered together. At the end furthest from the altar a stone screen highly carved divides off the choir, and by so doing destroys the effect which would have been produced by a view up the centre. Notwithstanding this fault, I delighted to pace up and down the aisles, gazing at the elegant tracery-work above, and those graceful columns, which give it more the appearance of some gigantic bower of the forests of America, petrified by the hand of magic, than an edifice built by human means. Here is no whitewash, or paint and gilding of modern barbarism, to destroy the chaste simplicity of the pure stone, the pale pink tint of which causes an inexpressible lightness and airiness to pervade the whole edifice. On each side are four chapels, also with arched roofs, and having iron railings in front, some of them containing a few good paintings.

There is everywhere much rich carving, particularly in the stone-screens which surround the choir; and in the end of the choir, facing the altar, is a handsome iron railing.

The dome is of great height, and here some painting, displaying the most vivid colours and a slight proportion of gilding, has much added to the effect. Beneath it we sat for some time each day,

indulging in the sensations of tranquil delight which the surrounding scene was so well calculated to produce: a tempered light thrown over us through the high windows of the deeply-stained glass adding to the effect.

It is, indeed, a temple fit for the exercise of a pure and bright religion, not such as taught and practrised by ascetic bigots, but such as the great Architect of this beautiful world—the God of love and mercy—can alone approve, full of hope and aspirations after divine knowledge and perfection!

Care is obviously everywhere bestowed in keeping it in the most perfect order. The floors are scrupulously clean, the water in the fonts pure, the carving is undisfigured by dust or cobwebs, and the priests, as they sedately pace the solemn aisles in their flowing robes, have a dignified appearance, as though they fully appreciated the respect due to their church and office.

The sacristy is an elegant Gothic hall; no tawdry pictures or figures of saints disfiguring the walls. Not a particle of paint or gilding is to be seen, except on the frames of four mirrors of immense size, which, however, seem strangely out of place, though not useless, as they enable the priests to adjust their robes with becoming grace and elegance. We were amused by seeing a handsome young acolyte giving a glance round at them with much the same air as a lady casts her last look at her boudoir mirror, when her abigail has given her the finishing touch, and her carriage is announced to convey her to some ball where conquests await her charms.

From the more modern edifice a door conducted us at once into the old cathedral, which, although it cannot vie in size and magnificence with its younger rival, even surpasses it in the chaste simplicity of its architecture. It also is of the Gothic, but less ornamented style, nor has time stamped it with any disfiguring marks whereby its more ancient date might be assumed. Here is little or no carving: simple columns and pointed arches of the same pink stone alone meet the eye; and were it not thus placed in juxtaposition with the new cathedral, it would itself be considered by all as a very beautiful edifice. Having had no cicerone, either to induce us to fill our note-books with mis-statements and absurd tales, or to impart correct intelligence, as the case might be, I can give no further positive information respecting these cathedrals. I believe the larger one was built about the end of the sixteenth century, and that, however much we admired it, it is yet inferior in size and beauty to those of Seville, St. Jago de Compostella and Toledo; and perhaps several other Spanish edifices.

While making a circuit of the city, outside the walls, we encountered a gentleman whom we addressed to gain a piece of information, when after some conversation, he told us he was mayor domo, or director, of an *hospicia*, a foundling hospital; and seeing we were strangers, politely invited us to visit the establishment under his care. As we walked along, being some distance from the place, we had much interesting conversation with him; for as he was a well-educated man, he fully understood the Latin and Portuguese

words we introduced, to help out our Spanish; he in return making use only of such phrases as he thought we should comprehend.

The walls of Salamanca are such as anciently surrounded cities; of no service in the present day as fortifications, except to withstand a sudden attack of cavalry. Over the gateways are arches with square towers of no great height, built of stone, of the same delicate tint as the cathedral, and elaborately carved. They owe their existence to the early days of the Bourbon dynasty, during which period many other superb structures were raised in different parts of Spain. The French fortifications which held out so long and so boldly against the arms of Lord Wellington were situated outside of the city, to the west, on heights overhanging the Tormes. The principal of them surrounded the now ruined convents of San Vincente, and was called after it; the other two, on the opposite side of a deep ravine, were named La Merced and St. Cajetano. For their construction a vast number of convents and other edifices were pulled down, among which our friend told us was the building of the institution over which he presided; its place having only been recently supplied by a new structure, still incomplete, and far inferior in beauty to the former one, though well adapted for the purpose.

These, and worse examples of havoc and destruction committed by the French, so exasperated the inhabitants against them, that the feeling of bitter animosity has not, even to the present day, worn off; and as they walk through their once beautiful and now half-

ruined city, they curse in their hearts the fell invaders who were the agents of its demolition. "On the arrival of Lord Wellington, to commence the siege of the forts, Salamanca became a scene of rejoicing; the houses were illuminated, and the people shouting, singing and weeping for joy gave him their heart-felt welcome," says Napier. How has the feeling towards Englishmen now changed! I was speaking to a Spaniard (not our amiable acquaintance) respecting the feelings entertained by the Portuguese towards the French, whose manners and ideas they love to adopt, and whom they regard with friendship, though they have been their bitterest enemies; while the English, from their retiring and reserved behaviour, and the difference of their customs, are looked upon by the greater number of people, if not with dislike, at least with indifference; yet they have ever been their firmest allies. I did not seek for a compliment for my nation, nor was the Spaniard inclined at all to pay one. His answer was characteristic of his nation—it spoke volumes.

"Oh!" he answered in a haughty tone, giving his cloak an additional cast over his shoulder, for we were pacing beneath the arcades of the Plaça de la Constitucion—"Oh! *we* require neither the presence of the one, nor of the other: all we demand is to be left alone—we want no foreign interference."

To the same peron I spoke of the idea so general of uniting the two countries of Spain and Portugal under one government. His only answer was a sneering laugh, which said as plainly as words: "It may be

very well for us, but the Portuguese will learn to repent the measure."

From what little I heard, I should say that the Spaniards have very slight affection for the English; but that in those places where the armies of France passed (and where did they not?) they thoroughly detest the French; and I also believe that the sentiment is reciprocal. We once possessed the esteem, if not the love, of the inhabitants of the whole Peninsula, but through our own folly, our own acts—through our utter disregard of all the means necessary to retain it, *we have now lost it*, and, more than that, they now not only bear us no love, but *they despise us*. Whether this feeling is cherished justly or not, of its existence I am convinced, and scarcely can one speak to a native of either country, than the feeling oozes out in the course of conversation. We are hated and despised by either country, just in proportion as we have interfered in her domestic disputes, or opened negociations with her. By the Spaniards therefore we are hated less, by the Portuguese more.

This shews that we have interfered insufficiently, and inopportunely, and that our negociations have been ill-conducted; for if they themselves were to blame, they would not, at all events, despise us. They have both of them, it is true, prayed for our assistance, but at first we refused it, and then late in the day sent a trifling aid: when they exhibited willingness to enter into a commercial treaty, we, consistently with our former conduct, allowed the affair to remain unconcluded to the great injury of our commerce.

But I have made a wide digression, and must return to our walk with the director of the hospital, in the now deserted *alamedas* round the walls. We passed, just before entering the northern gate, a large handsome convent, a stone building completely unroofed and falling into decay. There were formerly in, or close to the walls of Salamanca, twenty-five convents for monks, and the same number of nunneries. Of the latter a few are still inhabited, but the number of their inmates has much diminished, and by far the greater proportion are little more than heaps of ruins.

The collegiate establishments appear to have been on a most liberal scale; their present magnificence conveying a tolerably correct notion of what they must have been in their days of prosperity. We passed one large edifice, in which the students intended for certain learned professions were, after they had taken their degree, allowed to reside. A handsome table was provided for them; their only expense being for their clothes and books. Another of the same description existed for those about to take priest's orders. In several other colleges the government paid the chief, if not all the necessary expenses of the students; but such aid is now completely withdrawn, and those colleges which have not funds of their own to depend on, are consequently abandoned, and falling into decay.

In the Colegio Viejo, and those colleges frequented by the noble and more wealthy students, they paid their own expenses; but the lectures, I fancy, were, and still are, free.

Many students, again, do not reside within the

walls of any establishment; merely frequenting the lectures in the university, and living as they best can in lodgings about the town. Some were so poor that they were reduced to beg for the means of sustaining life; but I believe that there are few of that class at present.

Passing through the north gate, we stood for a minute close to the present Irish college, the rector of which is not only the sole Irishman, but the only person belonging to it. It is a handsome building, but not to be compared in size and beauty to the Jesuits' college, formerly inhabited by the Irish, where great numbers came over to be educated for the priesthood. I wish most sincerely that they continued still to do so, for here they would receive a suitable education, which is more than can be predicated of that imparted in their own country.

The spot called O'Connel to the mind of our companion, and he seemed pleased to hear of his liberation from prison.

"He ought not, certainly, to stir up the people to rebel," he observed; "but I fully believe he has no intention to injure England. Oh, he is one of the greatest men of the day!"

"No one denies his extraordinary and peculiar talents," I answered; and I called to mind the impudent treason Mr. Haverty puts forth in his book on Spain, regretting, with the greatest coolness, that Hoche did not succeed in his descent on Ireland, when she might have become an independent kingdom. A province of France she would probably have

become, under a far more grinding tyranny than any of which she has yet to complain, or else racked with dissensions, which would soon have compelled the party to call in foreign aid to quell them, while England would have sustained most serious injury. If such are the wishes a follower dares openly to promulgate, the aims of his chief may justly be suspected.

As our friend pointed out the many once proud structures, now overthrown, his voice assumed a tone of sadness. "Have you not observed," he said, "that there appears a mania throughout the world among men to destroy the grandest works of art, and the most useful institutions which the talent and wisdom of their forefathers have established? Here a horde of savage barbarians, with blind fury, assail some beautiful building, they know not why—they cannot understand its use and its graceful proportions—it is before them—and they must satisfy their longing to destroy. In the same way we see on every side educated (they call themselves) demagogues and infidels attacking the most sage, the once most esteemed and ancient institutions, civil and religious, both because they were esteemed by their fathers, and that they, finding themselves unable to comprehend their use, deem that by their own sagacity they can construct others superior, and then when confusion ensues, they blame their fathers' acts as the cause, and not their own daring folly."

These observations explained our new friend's principles; and too much reason had he in thus speaking, when regarding the scenes of havoc and destruction

of which his country has been the theatre; yet, though looking back with an eye of affection on former times, he was evidently an enlightened and most amiable man, of which we were soon to have indubitable proof.

"Come, I will shew you what you may think worth a visit," he said, as he led us through the doorway of an edifice of some size, the architecture of the most simple style, and of plain stone. The first room we entered appeared like a large warehouse, filled with piles of cloth, blankets, linen, stockings, and every article of men and women's dress.

"Everything you see here is made by the inmates of the establishment; nothing but the raw wool and flax, or thread and yarns, comes within these walls—and these are extra things, manufactured for sale, and not required to clothe the people." He then led us into a large court-yard, around which were arranged workshops of every description. There were weavers of various sorts of cloths, shoe-makers, rope-makers, carpenters, &c., with two or more masters presiding over each department. The boys were of all ages; every one of them had a rosy and healthy appearance. They greeted the director with smiles, and a nod of the head as he appeared, still continuing at their work. We then went up stairs, and through the dormitories—large, well-ventilated rooms—each child having a separate bed, looking as neat and clean as possible. But I was still more pleased, on entering a large apartment, at the door of which stood a respectable-looking old woman, at seeing fifty little girls

of nearly the same age rising from the low stools on which they were sitting at work, their young faces wreathed with no artificial smiles, pronounced in silvery tones, "*Dios guarda, ustedes*"—"God protect you, sir." Telling them all to sit down and be good girls, the director addressed a few words to the presiding matrons, inquiring how such and such a little girl had behaved, while in the mean time the happy children were laughing and making whispered observations to each other on our appearance. He then took us to another room, where there were older girls, and where the same pleasing scene was again exhibited—smiles and tones of contentment on every side. In a third room the girls were nearly grown up, all neatly dressed in uniform, their hair being drawn back, and fastened in a knot on the top of the head. He good-humouredly scolded one of the matrons for not drawing down a blind, to prevent a workman on the roof of another part of the building from looking in. Here if the inmates did not laugh outright, as much as the younger ones, they smiled as sweetly; and though there were but a few faces which might be considered pretty, none of the girls looked plain.

There are 200 girls and matrons, and 250 boys and workmen, supported in the institution; but besides this, there are 800 infants out at nurse in the surrounding villages. The boys and girls live in different wings of the building, and can never meet. There is one common school-room, where by turns they all attend for two hours each day—abundance

of time for them to acquire all the rudiments of education. We visited a large apartment containing two patent carding machines, just arrived from England, and set in motion by donkeys or oxen below. The girls reside here till they are twenty-two years of age, when they are allowed to marry, or to go out as servants; but they are always looked upon as protégés of the institution, and may at any time return when they are out of place. The aged, too, both men and women, are again, if in poverty, received into the establishment; and we saw several who had returned to end their days in the only home their infancy had ever known.

I must not forget to mention the bakehouse and flour-store, which supplies much of the bread consumed in the city, and very good it appeared to be. Their food is of the best and most simple kind; and certainly I never saw 450 children together with more visible signs of health. "We eat to live, and do not live to eat, is the maxim here observed," said the director.

Combined with this establishment is a sort of Magdalene, or somewhat of a correctional prison, to persuade to reformation, I believe; to which part of the building of course no strangers are admitted. As we passed the door a most respectable-looking woman was sitting at it, a lady in her dress and appearance, whom the director observed was the superintendent.

When about to leave, our friend took us to see the wheel. An infant had that instant been received,

and there lay the little being, unconscious of the change, sleeping calmly in a neat clean cradle, watched over by one of the two nurses always kept in attendance. The other nurse was rocking the cradle of a child received earlier in the morning; and most assuredly I never saw finer specimens of womankind for the purpose of affording nourishment than those two nurses. It must be a great temptation to poor people to put their children into the wheel, when they know how well they will be provided for; but I believe the love of offspring, so strong in the breasts of mothers, more frequently overcomes the temptation; and the greater number who are there left are such as have no legal right to a father's name—far more happy than if left to buffet the rude billows of the world alone.

Truly this institution afforded me more satisfaction than anything I saw in the course of my tour. It made me think better of human nature, and raised the Spanish character infinitely higher in my estimation than I had been inclined to regard it. Here, in a country distracted to its inmost core with wars and civil broils, flourishes an institution, in which the most divine of all precepts, charity, is followed out to its utmost extent; and probably not only in this city, but in many more, are there similar beneficent establishments. Yet within a few hundred yards of it rise the walls of an enormous bull-fighting circle, where the most barbarous and cruelty-exciting exhibition of modern Europe is still held with great magnificence.

I wish I were able to give a fuller account of this admirable establishment; but I suspect the character of the individual at its head infuses into it the happy contented spirit I saw reigning.

We will not discuss the point whether or not such institutions encourage sin in any way. I believe not, and that they frequently prevent crime, and enable many an unfortunate girl to regain her character, and preserve her infant, who would in England be turned out into the streets to beg and die, or to do worse, to support existence, as many of my readers must be painfully aware. At all events, we cannot but respect the philanthropy of the founders, and the enlightened and mild system with which the whole establishment is conducted.

It must be observed, that a large proportion of children are not foundlings received at the wheel, but orphans who have been left entirely destitute. I also earnestly recommend any of my readers who may visit Salamanca, to inspect the establishment, and they will see that I am far from having described it in too glowing colours. The edifice was most wantonly pulled down by the French, as before stated, to construct their fortifications, and rebuilt in 1818.

Returning to our hotel, the master volunteered to accompany us to several places worth seeing. The first was the church of St. Domingos, which stands, having a wide open space before it, next to the now ruined convent to which it formerly belonged. The front porch, with a circular arched roof, is one mass of carved work, as is indeed the whole front, most

elaborately executed. It is of the Gothic, though far from what can be called a pure style; but I pity the man who can stop to criticise severely when visiting that elegant building. The interior was more simple, with scarce a particle of gilding to be seen; nor were there any screens to impede the view; indeed, we both preferred it on the whole, to the cathedral, though very inferior to it in point of size.

Our next visit was to the building called the University, the oldest collegiate edifice in Salamanca, in whose quadrangle the Irish students were wont to assemble and dispute in the days of Gil Blas. A more modern front has been added, (as has been done to all the other buildings of the same date), much ornamented with carving. On each side of the quadrangle are the lecture-halls; and leading out of a long gallery above the arcade is the library. The master of our hotel, who had himself been a student, introduced us to the librarian, who politely shewed us through it. It is a long hall of simple and good taste, with tables and comfortable seats down the centre for the students, and at one end a handsome table and luxurious sofas for the heads of the college. The books are classed under different titles, painted over each division, but R—— was much amused at the rather strange works incongruously grouped together; and it is without doubt very inferior to that of Coimbra. There are, we were told, 25,000 volumes, chiefly, as we saw, on divinity and law, with the best-known classical authors; but the greater number were of common editions. The present being the vacation-time, as at Coimbra, all the

colleges were closed and the professors absent; the only students being those attending the medical lectures. We met a party of them coming out of the university, without the college-dress: their appearance was precisely similar to the same class in any other country.

We now returned to dinner, which we took in the public room called the *comedor*, and afterwards sallied out to walk in the Plaça de la Constitucion, where we were told the gay world would assemble about nine o'clock. At that hour most certainly a number of ladies in dark veils, and gentlemen in large cloaks, did assemble, and pace round and round beneath the arcades; but the lamps gave so dim a light that it was scarcely possible to distinguish one person from the other, thus leaving full scope for the imagination to dwell on the loveliness of the sable beings who passed in groups by us. Now and then, by posting ourselves so that the light of the nearest lamp fell on the countenances of the promenaders, we fancied we beheld some beautiful creature; but I should be sorry to pronounce a judgment on the subject. Two or three writers have been so ungallant as to affirm that the ladies of Salamanca are the plainest in Spain, which may possibly account for the judicious dimness of the lamps or the calumny may have been uttered in revenge for their cruelty in thus concealing their charms; and I should advise them forthwith, if they are anxious to recover their character, to insist on their lords and masters better lighting the plaça.

In a street leading off from the square we found a

café in the Italian style supplied in abundance with the most delicious ices, and with gambling rooms above, to which we were invited. Round the tables numbers of men were crowded: fierce and eager were their countenances. We looked on a few minutes; but to see men so employed always sickens me, as if there were not enough else in the world to engage their minds, instead of seeking this unnatural excitement. Many of them probably would have disdained to become merchants, as a mercenary occupation—yet to win money is the gambler's stimulant! Thus for hours at a time will he sit in a close stifling atmosphere, to follow his occupation. Mercenary wretches! I despise gamblers, and have but little respect for any men whom beyond an hour or so cards can amuse. We hurried from the disgusting scene, and finding the paseo almost deserted, proceeded homewards, and soon afterwards to bed.

SKETCH XXVIII.

The Douro where it divides Spain from Portugal.

Another Perambulation of Salamanca. View from the Summit of the Cathedral. Church of the Jesuits' College. Encounter a couple of Frenchmen: their rabid hate of Spaniards. Irish College. The Plaça dos Toros. Colegio Viejo. Bridge. Asses alone used as Beasts of burden. Vehicles. To make Chocolate. After an excellent Dinner, bid farewell to Salamanca. The Battle-field of the Arapiles. Golfegas. Savage Sport. Rustic Merry-making at the Pueblo of Villiar. Town of Vitegodinho. Val de Rodrigo. Horse taken ill. Spanish Frontier. Village of Meisa. Narrow and rugged Pass to reach the Douro. Cross into Portugal again.

After taking our chocolate we walked out to prosecute our discoveries. The cathedral was our first point; and finding the door of its lofty tower open, we ascended towards the summit, passing through a large room, the residence of the bell-ringer. I thought we should never reach it, so many and winding are the steps; but we were amply rewarded for our pains.

Each of the pinnacles have also beautiful spiral steps of a peculiar construction. From the south-east, the Tormes makes a broad sweep round, between rocky, and rather high banks, passing close to the city, and then turning slightly to the north. More to the south of the direction whence it flows are to be seen the village, and two heights of Arapiles, about a league and a half distant, where the arms of Britain and her allies gloriously triumphed over the legions of France. Round the outside of the walls were scattered the remains of many large and rich convents, destroyed by the French, and within appeared numerous others, their dilapidated roofs foretelling their speedy decay; while on every side rose the steeples and towers of nearly twenty churches, of various sizes and architecture, the houses having mostly small courts in the centre, into which the windows of the principal rooms look.

We next visited the church of the Jesuits' College, the façade of which, supported by lofty Corinthian columns of fine granite, is most superb. Indeed, though a great admirer of the so-called Gothic style, the Grecian, I own, far surpasses it in grandeur, when in the vast proportions of this edifice; but, alas! an immense rent in the domed roof, through which the sky could be seen, shewed too plainly that this also will soon sink to destruction with its ruined brethren.

After wandering through the streets for some time, we returned to breakfast. In the comedor we met two Frenchmen, strangers like ourselves, whose conversation much amused us; and on finding we spoke

French, they with eager delight broke forth into the fiercest vituperation of the Spaniards, for whom they could scarce find sufficient words of abuse.

"Spain is a lovely country," said one—"a magnificent country; but the inhabitants are savages—brutes—whom nothing will reclaim: if my advice were followed it would become a grand country—ah!"

"What is the advice Monsieur offers?" I asked.

"Sweep every Spaniard from the face of the land into the sea, and people it with Frenchmen," he answered, giving a twirl to his moustache, and a grunt of contentment at the thought.

"But would you sweep the Spanish ladies into the sea also?" said I, smiling.

"*Oh mon Dieu! non.* I would preserve them, except those of this horrid place," he replied, laughing scornfully. "What a place! what dirty narrow streets! no theatre—the public walk so dark that you knock your head against your friend without seeing him—and then the churches are, after all, but churches; and then the heaps of ruins. Ah! the French did that; and it is a pity they did not knock down still more—the beasts of people that these are."

I could not avoid laughing at the Frenchman's impudent coolness, in abusing the people for not building up the city his countrymen had knocked about their ears. His system is precisely what the French are now practising in Algeria—cutting the natives in pieces, to people the land afresh. The French have ever looked on Spain with an envious eye—and will most assuredly, on the first opportunity, make them-

selves masters of it; nor is that opportunity, perhaps, far distant. I doubt not these gentlemen had reason to be annoyed at the behaviour of the Spaniards towards them; for several times we were mistaken for them, and on our declaring ourselves to be Englishmen, censurable as has been our policy to their country, we experienced an instant and favourable difference in the manner of the people.

Again sallying forth, we went to the present Irish college, from which the rector was absent; but the porter at once shewed us round the building. It is on the same plan as nearly all the others—a large quadrangle in the centre, with an arcade on each side on the ground-floor, and a gallery round the upper story, the roof supported by handsome pillars above. The private rooms are elegantly and luxuriously furnished in the most complete English style. There is a large hall, formerly used for grand convocations of the heads of the college, and which is still kept in perfect order; the sofas and chairs of richly-ornamented Spanish leather, the ceiling well painted (I forget with what subject), the floor covered with a thick Indian mat: in truth, it looked more like some nobleman's drawing-room than a college-hall. We were also shewn the library, a handsome room, well stocked with a great variety of literary works; and we were much amused when looking over the forbidden books locked in glass cases, to see some of them by authors decidedly opposed to Romanism. The rector, uniting in his person all the other offices of the college, receives the whole of the remaining revenues, which we were told

are considerable, and being much attached to Spain, he cannot accede to his friends' wishes, and return to Ireland. Limerick is, I believe, his native city. I think he is perfectly right to remain where he is, for he would lose sadly by the change.

We were anxious to see the circus where the bull-fights are held; and finding out the proprietor, a quiet-looking little old man, who had two years ago built it, he sent a person to gratify us. The Plaça dos Toros, as it is called, is a vast amphitheatre, built chiefly of stone, of two stories, the upper boxes, and the railings in front of the lower tier only, being of wood. The seats rise one above another, nearly thirty deep; the price of entrance to which is one or two pesetas, accordingly as they are more or less in the shade, and eight pesetas are paid for a seat in the boxes in the shade, or forty dollars (about 8*l.*) for a shady box, holding twenty people, for the entertainment, which lasts four days. There are four entrances to the circus; one for the live bulls, one for the dead ones to be drawn out, one for the horses, and the fourth for the matadors. The first has the *coral*, or yard, behind it, and contains four parallel passages, with four doors in each passage, over which is a stage with trap-doors. Thus one bull is driven in, and the door closed behind him, then another is driven in, and penned in likewise, and so on till sixteen bulls are secured. When the signal is given the people on the stage open the front door with ropes, and the bull rushes out. Afterwards the next door is prepared to be opened at a moment's notice, the people goading

on unseen the fierce animal, if necessary. On the stage the musicians are stationed, as well as the owners of the bulls. The boxes are fitted up for the occasion with rich hangings, gay flags waving above them; and when filled with many thousand people, as it often is, the spectacle must be very grand. The last fight was in September, when the man said, I think, there were eight thousand people present—and none of the matadors were killed.

We had been taken, during our journey, for natives of many different countries, and for followers of various callings; but never before, as our cicerone now supposed us to be, for managers of a company of athletæ or equestrian performers. The truth is, the Spaniards have so little taste for travelling, that they cannot suppose any persons will give themselves so much trouble, and be at so much expense, merely for amusement.

There are so many descriptions of bull-fights in the works on Spain, that I will not describe one, especially as I was never present at one in the country. That they have a brutalizing effect on the feelings of the people, I think no one can doubt; and I suspect that they have had an iufluence in causing much of the savage system of bloodshed, worthy only of the dark ages, which has of late years half depopulated Spain. In one or two parts of Portugal there are still occasionally bull-baits, but not with dogs, nor do the animals suffer injury beyond a few darts thrown at them. At all events, during the civil war, with few exceptions, there were no revolting murders committed,

or a single prisoner executed. These facts alone speak much in favour of the Portuguese.

On our walks through the city we passed frequently a beautiful church, with a porch of marble, belonging to the ruined convent of St. Clara. But it would fill a volume to describe all the grand buildings in the city. I must not omit, however, the Colegio Viejo opposite the cathedral, which we now visited, and were instantly admitted; though on application with the master of the hotel he was refused. A flight of steps leads to the front porch, which is of great height, with vast granite columns of the Doric order. The quadrangle is very handsome, so is the council-hall, but not equal to that of the Irish college: the students' rooms were locked up.

Again we spent some time in the cathedral, and then crossed the bridge to reach a neighbouring hill, whence I wished to take a sketch of the city. The bridge is of great length, with an archway in the centre, having a high roof, like the top of a Chinese temple. The half nearest the city was constructed by the Moors; the other part, on the further side of the gateway, is of much later date.

The banks of the river above which the city stands are rocky; the ancient walls being in some places scarcely to be distinguished from the native stone. On the left appear the remains of the French fortifications round the ruined convent of San Vincente; the houses and steeples clustering round the cathedral, which seems to form the point of attraction to all the rest. Above the city the river makes a sudden fall over

rocks, where are collected a number of small, primitive-looking mills, the width being considerable, but I believe fordable in summer in many places.

Returning over the bridge, after finishing my sketch, I met a couple riding on one horse, the lady on a pillion behind her liege lord; the steed as richly caparisoned probably as the one honoured by bearing Queen Elizabeth's royal weight in the same manner. In walking through the streets, one meets troops of donkeys without halters, some carrying water in jars, others dust (the sweepings of the streets) in straw-baskets; some, charcoal in sacks; indeed, a variety of other things; but neither horses nor mules appeared degraded as beasts of burden.

However, the coaches afforded us most amusement—little changed in form or quality, I should think, since the days of Gil Blas; although the diligences must travel rather faster, as they contrive to reach Madrid in two days and a night; but the accommodation they offered did not tempt us to proceed thither, especially as time pressed us, R—— being anxious to return to England.

The ladies here all wear the ancient Spanish costume, but the gentlemen have adopted the usual European style; though hats of all shapes and sizes, and cloaks of all lengths, are to be seen on the persons of the promenaders in the plaça.

On returning to the hotel, we completely won our landlady's heart by taking a lesson from her in making chocolate; and most certainly the mixture used in Spain is very unlike anything I ever tasted in

England. Take an ounce of chocolate, and put it into a small pot with about three large table-spoonfulls of milk, boil the whole, keeping it in motion with a stick twirling between the palms of the hands, and having a piece of wood notched round at the end, and a thick ring, to serve the purpose of a mill-stone, above it. When the mixture boils up, pour it into a tiny mug, and drink it if you can—I could never manage to do more than eat it, as one does an egg, with toast, and then to wash it down with a glass of water. After taking it one may walk eight miles before one's nominal breakfast, without fatigue; so sustaining are the qualities it possesses.

A nice dinner, of some six covers, brought on the table in succession by the pretty little Manuella, and a walk after it in the plaça, closed the amusements of our last day in Salamanca.

Manuella's countenance was wreathed with smiles as we made her a small present on bidding her farewell; the rest of the family were all civility; nor was the charge for our entertainment at all exorbitant, considering its excellence. The old lady having supplied our saddle-bags with provisions for two days, we once more crossed the bridge, steering our course for the borders of Portugal, so as to pass through the town of Torre de Moncorvo in that country. We regretted not having time to visit the battle-field of Arapiles, by which name the Spaniards call the battle of Salamanca. The less they speak of it the better; for though a bloody and glorious one for England, they did but little for their country's

cause—the Portuguese, however, fought bravely on the occasion. A day or two before the battle the Duke of Wellington and Lord Beresford ran a narrow chance of being slain, or taken prisoners. "They were on a height, with their staffs, examining the enemy's movements, when a body of French cavalry came galloping at full speed across the valley. It was for a moment thought they were deserting, but with headlong course they mounted the table-land on which the British left wing were posted, driving a whole line of cavalry skirmishers back in confusion. The reserves indeed soon came up, and these furious swordsmen being scattered in all directions, were in turn driven away, or cut down; but meanwhile thirty or forty, led by a noble officer, had brought up their right shoulders, and came over the edge of the table-land, above the hollow which separated the British wings, at the instant when Wellington and Beresford arrived on the same slope. There were some infantry picquets in the bottom, and higher up, near the French, were two guns covered by a squadron of light cavalry, which was disposed in perfect order. When the French officer saw this squadron, he reined in his horse with difficulty, and his troops gathered in a confused body round him, as if to retreat. They seemed lost men, for the British instantly charged, but with a shout the gallant fellows rushed down upon the squadron, and the latter turning galloped through the guns; then the whole mass, friends and enemies, went like a whirlwind to the bottom, carrying away Lord Wellington and the other generals,

who with drawn swords and some difficulty got clear of the tumult. The French horsemen were now quite exhausted, and a reserve squadron of heavy dragoons coming in, cut most of them to pieces; yet their invincible leader, assaulted by three enemies at once, struck one dead from his horse, and with surprising exertions saved himself from the others, though they rode hewing at him on each side for a quarter of a mile." This is one of the many romantic episodes of war's varied scenes, so admirably portrayed by Colonel Napier.

He describes how the two armies marched within sight of each other towards the ground which was to prove the field of death and fame to so many brave men. "The Allies, moving in two lines of battle within musket-shot of the French, endeavoured to gain upon and cross their march at Cantalpino; the guns on both sides exchanged their rough salutations as the accidents of the ground favoured their play, and the officers, like gallant gentlemen, who bore no malice and knew no fear, made their military recognitions, while the horsemen on either side watched with eager eyes for an opening to charge.

"On the 22d of July, 1812, the English general having determined to retreat to Ciudad Rodrigo, the French seized on one of two rocky isolated heights, called the two Arapiles, in order to intercept his march, and were about to seize the other, when he ordered the Portuguese seventh Caçadores to occupy it, which, in spite of the enemy's attacks, they did. Marmont now dispatched his left towards Ciudad

Rodrigo, to attack the Allies on their march, thereby separating it from his centre. The fault was flagrant, and the British general fixed it with the stroke of a thunderbolt. General Pakenham was ordered to charge—the French gunners stood manfully at their posts, but vainly; they were cut down, or dispersed, and in less than half an hour the left of their army was turned, thrown into confusion, and enveloped. Marmont was wounded, Thomières killed, and Bonet disabled. In a magnificent charge of cavalry, led on by Sir Stapleton Cotton, the right wing was broken, and five guns captured by Lord Edward Somerset. The centre of the French offered the greatest resistance, hundreds of the men of General Hulse's brigade going down, in a charge they made under a terrific fire; but at last the enemy gave way; General Clauzel being hurt, and many other principal French officers killed or disabled. The action continued general till night, when, still fighting, Foy's division retreated into a large forest, the effulgent crest of the last ridge maintained bravely by General Maucune became black and silent, and the whole French army vanished as it were into darkness."

"Lord Wellington, with the left wing, pursued the enemy through great part of the night, hoping to overtake them at the ford of Huerta, on the Tormes; but the fort of Allia on that river having been abandoned by the Spaniards, they entered it, and secured their retreat. Lord Wellington was during the night struck in the thigh by a spent ball, which passed through his holster, and Sir Stapleton Cotton was wounded in the

arm by a Portuguese sentinel, whose challenge he had disregarded."

Such is an imperfect sketch of one of the most important and hard-fought battles of the Peninsula; and I hope it may not be found uninteresting by those who have not Napier before them to peruse.

On losing sight of the Tormes, we pursued a wild track due west: few people except smugglers ever follow this direction, and the scenery afforded little to interest us. The country is chiefly open, with here and there broken hills rising from the plain, sprinkled with pueblos some three or four miles distant from each other, forests of the low oak bearing a sweet acorn now and then intervening. After missing our way, and recovering it only by a long circuit, we halted to lunch at the village of Golfegas, in a large venda.

We spread our table in front of the kitchen-door, beneath the roof of the large outer hall, which nearly every Spanish inn possesses, that we might see all that was going forward. We soon were witnesses of a spectacle, which although a piece of acting, and intended for sport, clearly shewed the atrocities of which the performers could be guilty, when their passions were aroused. One of the landlady's daughters was a very pretty girl, and we were laughing and talking with her, when some one came in, and said a few words to the mother: a donkey was forthwith led out from the stable, and with a shawl thrown over her the girl nimbly jumped up on its back, a pack-cover with a gay cloth serving as a saddle, and accompanied by a fine-looking youth, rejoicing in a new sombrero,

a bright waistcoat, well-cleaned leggins, and a good cloak on his shoulder, went off, we supposed to church. Scarcely had they departed, than six men, their faces and clothes besmeared with charcoal-dust, and their countenances most villanous and fierce, arrived, driving some twenty or thirty donkeys before them, with empty packs. Sending the animals with many a kick and blow into the stables, after piling the packs on the ground, they seated themselves round another low table, nearer the door, rapidly tearing their food, and passing their wine-skin from mouth to mouth, till the contents were exhausted. Then began their pastimes. One drew his long knife, and flourishing it about the hall, seized the mistress of the house, holding her back over the table, while he drew it several times across her throat, almost scratching her as he did so; another held the younger daughter, with one hand menacing her with his knife, then throwing her down almost smothered her with the charcoal-sacks. The poor women, though they laughed, were evidently much annoyed; but they dared not complain, and were obliged to submit to the savage jokes.

We could scarcely tell if they did not intend to commence next with us; but though they frowned as they passed, we kept out of their way, and they did not attempt to molest us.

This sort of sport continued till the donkeys had eaten enough straw, when the men prepared for their departure; but just as they were going the elder daughter appeared: the mother instantly rushed forward, and seizing her, shut her up in an inner room,

till her unwelcome guests had disappeared, and then scolded her for returning so soon. Two youths with stout sticks, and probably sharp knives in their belts, who accompanied her, kept the wretches on their good behaviour. Josè, who had been a much disconcerted spectator of the scene, looked out after them to observe the way they took.

"Pretty joking that was, Senhores," he observed, as we rode away. "Did you mark the gleam of their eyes? they longed to be in earnest; and I would give much rather than meet them on an unfrequented road; but, *gracias a Deos*, they have gone a different one to that we must follow."

The next scene we witnessed was of a far more agreeable nature. The sun was yet some way above the horizon when we entered the large pueblo called Villiar, where we purposed to spend the night, there being no other posada for a considerable distance further on. We were first greeted as we rode up the street by a number of little girls nicely dressed, dancing before our horses; and who, when I shewed them a dog's head on the top of a cane I carried, broke out into shouts of merry laughter, accompanying us till we reached an open space before a church, where a number of peasants in gay and varied costumes were dancing to the sound of drum and fife. We rode on to the posada, a decent, clean-looking cottage, where we were ordering our evening meal, when a fine, tall, slim youth, whom we found to be the landlady's son, came in.

"Won't you come and see the dancing?" he said.

"Gladly, my friend;" so we accompanied him back to the village-green. We were directly recognized by our little friends. *El hombre con el pero!*—"The man with the dog!" they shouted, as they crowded round us, while we stood looking on at the dancers. There were several good-looking girls, and many of the youths were remarkably fine young fellows, especially our friend of the inn, who was evidently one of the beaux of the place. Some of the latter snapped the light castanet, to accompany the musician, a most indefatigable performer, who played on a drum with one hand, and touched the keys of a flageolet with the other at the same time, producing very enlivening if not refined music. There was much grace and more agility displayed in the dancing, which was as correct as is generally witnessed in the best society: the figures and steps were very similar to those of a Scotch reel, but there was less animation. One excessively pretty little girl, the belle of the party, was however, as animated as any Highland maiden, and was sought after, accordingly, by all the youths. No sooner had she fallen out of the figure, to give place to another, than with scarce time to breathe, she was again led back, not unwillingly on her part, to the dance.

Suddenly, as some thirty couples were thus dancing, the church-bell gave forth in a solemn tone the hour of even. In an instant the music ceased—the maidens stood with downcast eyes as they made the holy sign of the cross, and the youths doffed their hats, and rested with bended knee, while all uttered a short prayer. The effect was interesting and beautiful, and

we could not but join the lately laughing throng in their short devotions—if not in spirit, at least in appearance. Scarcely, however, had the bell ceased, and the last dying echos of its solemn tone been heard, than the enchantment was dissolved; the musician commenced playing his gayest tunes, and the dancers, snapping their light castanets, were once more in rapid motion.

The darkness, more than fatigue, put a stop to the festivities; but our tall young friend told us, that after supper there would be a regular ball in a house, and that if we liked it he would invite all the guests to his mother's inn. The offer we thought fit to decline; giving him a peseta to buy wine for the guests at any other house, and promising to accompany him thither after we had taken some refreshment.

There were several persons sitting round the fire in the posada; among them, a decent-looking woman, and a drunken wretch of a husband; who, after some time, pulled out from his belt a clasp-knife nearly a foot long, and commenced flourishing it about, grinning horribly at the time, frequently nearly wounding some of the company. At last an old man dressed in black, with long silvery white hair, and who had been indulging us for half an hour in a story about the Duke of Wellington, not one quarter of which could we understand, rose from his seat, and took the knife from the other's hand.

"You know not how to use that knife," he observed: "I will shew these cavaliers the true science of defence and attack." Saying which, he threw him-

self into a variety of attitudes, similar to those in the sword-exercise, now holding the knife as a dagger up his arm, now as a sword, and then as if about to throw it at his flying antagonist; his previously dim eyes lighting up with eagerness as though he were in earnest.

The youth Manoel was some time enjoying himself with his friends; but at last he appeared to conduct us to the ball. As may be supposed, the apartment could not boast of much magnificence, lighted as it was with six small lamps hung against the whitewashed mud-wall; but the dignified behaviour of the party was not to be surpassed by that of the most fashionable circles of the *beau monde*. The same musician as before was there, playing the same tune with the most unwearied perseverance, and standing in the middle of the room, while the dancers moved round him. We sat on a bench at the side, with a number of men, who seemed to think it beneath their dignity to join in the pastime. Though we were frequently pressed to do so, we excused ourselves on the plea of ignorance of the dance, and of wearing long spurs, with which we might risk hurting our partners' feet.

The dancers performed boleros, fandangos, and contra-danças, in succession, two couple in particular most admirably—the men, who exerted themselves far more than their fair partners, snapping their castanets, now above their heads, now close to the ground, in a variety of graceful movements. We were much amused by the nonchalant air with which the village dandies strolled into the room with broad sombreros on their

heads, their cloaks worn over one shoulder, and drawn in front, exhibiting the embroidered backs of their collarless waistcoats, the sleeves of their shirts exposed, with ruffles at the wrist, the fronts richly worked—new polished belts, clean well-fitting leggins, and tight breeches, completing the costume of a country exquisite of the kingdom of Leon. To say the truth, some of them were far from amiable-looking fellows; nor could anything surpass the haughty independent air they assumed, as they threw a careless eye over the dancers, and then strolled out again.

I have at times seen something approaching this conduct in an English country ball-room, or perhaps in some of the so-called fashionable assemblies in London, when one or two men, considering themselves belonging to the *élite*, have stood, hat in hand, blocking up the passages, and refusing all their hostess' well-intentioned offers to introduce them. There is, after all, but a very slight difference in the follies and behaviour of the different classes into which the world is divided—a little more tinsel, a little more painting, a greater power of concealment, alone prevents their being confounded in one. However, I am far from advocating an amalgamation of them; but it is only by the aristocracy keeping their own conduct free from censure, that they can hope to preserve the respect paid to their station: at the same time, such distinctions are not without their uses in a well-ordered community.

We found, on our return to the posada, a second supper of baked pears prepared for us, and we were

not sorry, after it, to take possession of a chamber devoted to our sole use, where we slept soundly till daylight the following morning.

In hopes of crossing the border before night, we pushed on as fast as we thought it prudent to urge our beasts. After riding three leagues, we passed a small town called Vitegodinho, containing several streets, a posada, a church, a plaça, and even some arcades; but refusing to halt, we unfortunately rode on a league further, to a hamlet called Val de Rodrigo. Within a few miles of each other are Roderick's city, castle, and valley. Probably they take their names not from the unhappy Roderick, the last of the Goths, but from Rodrigo de Bivar, the celebrated Cid Campeador, whose valiant deeds are to be found chronicled in Southey's admirable translation of the work of Alfonso the learned.

Whatever Val de Rodrigo may once have been, it is now a wretched village, with a small venda, before which we found a large party of contrabandistas playing at bowls, while at a back door, which we passed to reach the stables, three men were sitting on the ground, with a pile of copper-money before them, of which they were making an equal division. At first the smugglers taking us for Frenchmen, glanced at us with fierce looks, (for they were most of them old enough to remember the visit that people once paid them); but when they found we were English gentlemen, they tried to make amends by their civility and attention. We had indeed some difficulty to get our eggs boiled in hot water, the

presiding goddess of the kitchen putting the pot into my hand, and telling me I might do it myself, if I knew so much better how to cook than she did. The only shady spot we could find to place our table was at the back door, round which a small family of the hog tribe were feeding, with the stables opposite; and I certainly never ate a meal in a more disgusting place; but that mattered little—a greater misfortune awaited us.

Our horses had been heated, and kept standing before they were admitted into the wretched stable, the door of which was so low that mine struck his head on entering. We now found him with his legs stretched out on the ground, apparently dead. We however got him up, and led him out: he was perfectly lame. The smugglers looked at him knowingly. "He is blind of one eye, and will lose the other in a day or so," they observed. Josè however declared that I might ride him, and that exercise would restore him—at all events, onward we must move. "When you get to La Guaça go to the house of Senhor Josè Gomes, and if you tell him you met us thus far on our way, he will make you welcome," observed a cunning little old man, who looked as if smuggling was his delight, and cheating his neighbours his pastime.

With a grieving heart I mounted my poor beast for the last time. I rode a league, expecting every instant to have him fall down with me; and then, as I could no longer endure his pace of misery, I dismounted, and walked the rest of the day's journey, making Josè lead him. Passing through a village, we

bought a hare, a rabbit, and a partridge of a man for a peseta (about a shilling), and fastening them to the baggage, carried them on for our next day's supply. It was near sunset when we reached Meisa, the Spanish frontier village, boasting of a posada, the worst we had yet met. The place also possessed what we much required—a farrier.

The Portuguese village of Guaça is seen hence, looking most temptingly near; and we agreed half an hour would take us there; but we were most grievously out in our calculations. Josè's first care was to summon the farrier, who I suspect acted also as the medical attendant on the human beings in the place. He bled and blistered the horse, declaring he would recover in a day or two; and I found he had taken off all his shoes, so that without his consent we should have great difficulty in getting away.

As we dismounted at the posada a dreadful old crone tottered out to meet us. "Are you the mistress of the house?" I asked.

"Si, Senhor, I am."

"O then I fear we have made a mistake: we promised a man we met on the road to go to his posada; and he said his wife was at home," I observed.

"There is no other posada, Senhores," she answered. "And the man you met was my husband."

We found the old woman spoke truly; for she had had three husbands, and her present one was half her age. The house possessed an upper room, but destitute of beds, or a table; and she apologized for the

want of furniture by saying the French took away three cart-loads of her property, and she had been afraid of renewing it, lest they might return and again rob her. The smoke of green wood drove us out of the kitchen, so we were obliged to dine in this room; but we were too old travellers to be disconcerted. We sent out and borrowed a table, a bench there was in the room, and with our own provisions we fared luxuriously; though we had the pain of seeing our partridge burnt to a cinder in the palsied hands of the hostess.

We found two corn-sacks, which, half full of corn, we spread out on the floor to serve as mattrasses; when I observed to the young husband, that they were not as long as would be convenient, seeing our legs below our knees were not furnished with bedding. "Oh! that matters not," he answered coolly; "your legs don't want a bed too, surely—one for the body is quite enough." While we wrapped ourselves in our cloaks to sleep, the rest of the household, I believe, reposed on the stone-benches in the kitchen, for when I went down at an early hour I observed sundry blackish coverlids and horsecloths spread out.

For several hours after sun-rise were we waiting for the farrier, to conclude his operations on my unhappy steed; but being an invalid he could not venture out till the air was warm. He was a young man, with a grave expression of countenance, who when he first appeared, wore his cloak wrapped close around him, and after examining the animal, commenced a long harangue on the symptoms and treatment of the case, as far as we could understand; the only part

we comprehended clearly being, that it was fortunate we had met with a man of his experience, or the horse would most certainly have died. At last the shoes were replaced, and the poor beast so weak, that he could scarcely walk, was led forth. I, intending to get a horse at Guaça, which we thought we should reach in half an hour, set out on foot, R—— offering me his to ride up the opposite hill.

After passing over a heath, and between a few fields, we found the road begin to descend, and turn to the right, while Guaça appeared on our left: a shepherd however assured us we were going by the only way. On, on we went, descending lower and lower, the path becoming more narrow, steep, and rugged. At last it appeared to me impossible that the cargo-mule could pass, so I went on ahead of the rest, to see whither the path led; but finding the marks of horses' shoes, I shouted to them to follow. Hearing their voices, I continued in advance. The path overhung on one side by broken rocks and shrubs, with a rugged precipice on the other, continued making zig-zag turnings towards a rapid torrent, which dashed with a hoarse murmur at the bottom of the glen. Here and there grew a few olive-trees, and in one or two places the vine was cultivated; but in general the side of the mountain was as nature had left it.

"Truly," I thought, "the Spanish frontier on this side much resembles the character of the people—haughty, stern, and unapproachable. A few active men might defend this pass against a whole host of foes; and if this is the best in the neighbourhood there can be no other fit for human feet to climb."

Near the bottom of the glen, on a gentle rise, was a custom- and guard-house, most romantically situated—rugged and fantastically-shaped mountains rising to a vast height on every side, while the Douro flowed some way below it. Here the guards looked at our passports—I doubt if they could read them—and then shewed us the way, between a grove of olive-trees, down to the ferry. While crossing this magnificently wild pass I made a sketch*, which will give a better idea of the scenery than any verbal description can possibly do. Looking up towards the Spanish side, it appeared a lofty wall of rugged rocks broken here and there with fissures by the mountain-torrents, yet down those precipitous cliffs we had accomplished our descent. Our misfortunes were not ended, for on stepping into the boat, R——'s horse kicked off his shoe, and my poor beast, on trying to get out, slipped back into the water, but managed to escape without injury. Once on his descent his hind feet had slipped over the precipice, and though only hanging on by his front ones, he managed to recover himself. The mule also nearly pushed R——'s horse over, and was once near slipping over himself; for we found it most advisable to let them pick their own way down steep places.

Such are a few of the incidents travellers meet with in these countries. Having thus reached the borders of Spain, I may recommence my sketches of Portugal.

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*See Cut at the head of this Sketch.

SKETCH XXIX.

Portugal once more. Toilsome Ascent of the Cliffs. Village of Guaça: no Inn. Hire a fresh Horse and Guide. Uncomfortable Lodging. Torre de Moncorvo. Bad Weather sets in. Villa Flor. Uncouth People at the Estalagem. The Road passes over rugged and barren Hills. Mourça. Villa Verde. Village of St. Martin's. Enter on the Wine-district. Arrive at Regoa. Proceed down the Douro to Oporto. Scenery of the Banks. Rapids. Heavy Rains: the Boatmen hoist Umbrellas! Safe Arrival at Oporto.

The Douro where we crossed runs north and south, falling, in places, in cascades over vast rocks, and consequently is not navigable till some distance further down—at a place called Barco d'Alva. I shall not forget the wild grandeur of that passage of the Douro, or the far from pleasing sensations we experienced as we gazed upward towards the summit of the almost perpendicular cliffs we were obliged to surmount—the only way by which we could extricate ourselves from our present position. I most devoutly hope I may never find myself in the same spot again, with all my horses lame.

On landing the Spanish boatmen demanded the value of three shillings for ferrying us over. We of course refused, and thereupon they became insolent, till Josè entreated us to pay the sum; so we threw it to the rascals, and turned our backs upon Spain.

Up, up, up we toiled by much the same sort of zig-zag path as that by which we had descended, leading our lame steeds. Even here, precipitous as were the banks, olive-trees had been planted in a few accessible spots by the side of the path. An hour's constant

ascent under a yet hot sun brought us to some open downs, crossing which, and passing many magnificent chestnuts, a description of trees we had not seen in Spain, we entered the large village of Guaça.

Instead of the half hour in which we had hoped to reach the place, we discovered that three had passed since leaving Meisa; and fatiguing hours they were too!

Finding ourselves in a square with several neat houses in it, we expected to discover an inn; but, to our disappointment, we learned that the place boasted of no such accommodation, nor would the stables belonging to the venda contain our horses. We therefore accepted the proposal of some people to sojourn at their house, below which were some tolerable stables. They quickly swept out their best room, spread a table, collected plates and knives and forks from different friends, boiled some eggs, picked some fruit, so as to make a capital meal. We had, it must be confessed, rather a larger party looking on than would have been pleasant, considering we were not accustomed to such a regal style, had they not behaved in a most orderly and respectful way. They probably had never seen Englishmen eating before, so we were happy to afford them so trifling an amusement.

How did their obliging and attentive behaviour contrast with the pride and sullen indifference of the Spaniards! Their appearance, too, was much in their favour; for among a group of girls, collected outside the door, we observed more pretty faces than we had seen for several days in Spain. How bright and smiling

were their countenances, and how ready were one and all to execute our wishes, commiserating us for the long march we had been compelled to make! In truth, we felt ourselves once more among friends and countrymen.

Having sent Josè to procure a nag for me, after resting for nearly two hours, a young man, who might have been mistaken for an Englishman by his features and light hair, arrived with one of the small country-ponies, a light chestnut, which he affirmed was possessed of all the good qualities horses are ever endowed with. Luis was, by his bargain, to accompany us, both to act as guide and to bring back the pony.

The path led us for some distance through romantic lanes and beneath lofty chestnut-trees; it was a considerable time, however, before we lost sight of the high table-land of Spain, from which we had descended in the morning. The road now became very wide and remarkably even, so much so that I suspect it must have been a part of some military road leading round the frontiers. As there was little chance of missing the way, we were far ahead of the men when darkness overtook us. We passed a forest to our left, and what appeared to be a lake far away in a hollow to our right, and soon after entered a village of considerable size, passing through the streets of which, we reached a house we were told was the estalagem. Our attendants soon arrived to take care of our horses, while we ascended to the kitchen to take care of ourselves.

The landlord was a most civil fellow, but his wife

was a sad shrew; and as the house was full of men, returning from some place where they had been working, to Miranda, their native town, it was not till their cookery had been completed that she would attend to us. At first she was very angry at my presuming to tell her how I wished our hare dressed, which from being hung for two days was now tender, but a few soft words turned away her rising choler, and we became great friends. In proof of her regard she produced a tureen of most excellent soup.

The wind had now risen high, and blew through every cranny of the house, compelling us to sit in our cloaks for warmth, and giving us a specimen of the inconveniences of travelling in Portugal in bad weather. Our bed-room was a mere shed, opening on to the verandah in front of the house, and it was only by putting our lamp in a sheltered spot, that we could keep it from being extinguished by the tempestuous gusts; indeed, we employed ourselves some time in stopping up the larger chinks, before we attempted to retire to rest.

When we arose on Wednesday morning the sky was overcast with clouds, the cold air blew in sudden squalls, and there was every sign of bad weather. I must not forget to mention the delicious dish of stewed hare the now placid Xantippe dressed for our breakfast before we started, neither our affectionate leave-taking, which I might not have mentioned but to prove how gentle words will generally win over the worst of tempers. After riding three leagues over hills, and dales with sandy bottoms where lakes had

once been, by a tolerable road, we descended into the prettily situated town of the Torre de Moncorvo; from which place the highly-respected and estimable Portuguese ambassador at the court of London takes his title.

In the centre of the town are the ruins of a large round tower, or it may be called a castle, which last year the *administrador* thought fit to order to be pulled completely down; much of it having in consequence already disappeared. The place also possesses a large handsome church, and one of the best inns we found during our tour. The hostess sent us up a luncheon in the most civilized style. The house boasts of several very good bed-rooms, and a sitting-room; but she complained that the paucity of her customers scarcely enabled her to support it in the way she wished. In one of the streets we passed a chapel with a round stone pulpit in front of it, such as I have only once or twice seen in the country, and it evidently was of very great antiquity.

Finding that we were only a mile from the Douro, we sent down to learn if a boat was to be procured, to convey us to Regoa. We were much disappointed on hearing that the boatmen had been afraid to venture up, for fear of being seized to be employed in the works now going forward to improve the navigation of the river. We were therefore compelled to proceed by land to Regoa, the nearest place we could expect to find a boat to carry us to Oporto; for, with a prospect of bad weather, we had no wish to make a journey of so many days by land. While walking in

the streets a tremendous hurricane came on, scattering the tiles off the roofs upon our heads, and driving us for shelter into the nearest porch. Little rain had yet fallen, so we mounted our nags, and following Luis, took the road to Villa Flor.

We had not proceeded many yards when down came torrents of water, the wind blowing fiercely around us.

"We must cross the ponte, Senhor, without delay, or we may not be able soon to get by," said Luis; so on we pushed in spite of the storm, followed by our baggage-mule, leaving Josè to bring on the sick horse as he best could. Fortunately the road, passing for a considerable way over a sandy bottom was good, and in fine weather I have no doubt that the various shaped hills rising on every side must have a picturesque effect. I was here seized with an extraordinary desire of sleep, and in spite of the rain and wind, so slowly did we proceed, that I dozed for full an hour, waking up only for an instant to answer any observation R—— made to me. We thus rode on over three of the longest leagues I ever encountered, and just before dark reached the town of Villa Flor, prettily situated on rising ground, among groves of almond-trees.

The inn to which Luis took us was kept by the most quarrelsome family it was ever my lot to fall amongst. There was an immensely fat father, and an old care-worn mother, with four daughters and the same number of sons; and except one of the sons, who was a priest, and did not utter a word, and the youngest daughter, who was better employed in attend-

ing on us, they all swore and screamed at each other in turns.

My only protection against the rain had been a thin zephyr silk mackintosh cloak, and a thick straw hat on my head, yet I was not compelled to change any of my upper garments, while R——'s two ordinary coats were wet through.

The house appeared to be of considerable size, but so wretchedly divided that we could only obtain a small recess, with two beds close together, as a sleeping-room, and we were compelled to perform our toilet in public. The wind, too, whistled through the large apartments, and drove us, as soon as we had put on dry clothes, to seek the kitchen-fire, daring the dirt and smoke. There we sat, talking to the daughters of the host, who were performing various culinary operations, some for our benefit, others for a party of farm-labourers who were in the large hall, and others for the family. We also mulled a jug of wine for ourselves, when we were amused by one of the young men, who had got wet and gone to bed, coolly sending for a mug-full. The gentleman afterwards got up, and while we were supping sat himself down with us, and helped us from the dishes which his sister placed on the table. I do not believe he intended to be impertinent, but merely having a very good opinion of himself, he wished to impress us with the like idea, and at the same time to be civil. We again went back to smoke our cigars by the fire, which was on the floor, in the corner of a large high room, with bare stone walls, well blackened

with smoke. On one side of the fire was a bench, with fagots piled up behind it, and on the other low stools, on which the company arranged themselves round the embers. The saturnine priest sat opposite to us, conning some well-thumbed lives of the ancient fathers; nor would he answer a single word to the observations we addressed to him—while his sisters were scolding, screaming, or swearing at each other, or at two unfortunate little children, which we suspected belonged to one or other of the young ladies. To us all the time they were as civil and attentive as people could possibly be. Poor Josè, to our relief, arrived during the evening, with his sick charge, he himself being in a very little better state. Thus we passed a far from agreeable evening.

Thursday morning broke with a promise of finer weather. The youngest daughter brought us in for breakfast a basket of most magnificent figs, while the other sisters cooked some very nice dishes. After paying for our accommodation, and thanking them for their civility, we took leave of this most strange family at half past seven, and commenced a journey over one of the roughest roads I ever travelled. As Luis was anxious to accompany us further, I retained his pony; indeed, though I had some doubts of his power to carry me, I had no alternative, having been unable to procure one at Villa Flor. After passing groves of olive- and almond-trees, vineyards, and chestnut-trees, we were led up and down rugged and barren hills, without meeting for twenty yards together any ground on which we could trot our horses.

Mourça was the name of the next town we were to pass, but in vain we looked for it; hour after hour glided away, and we were told it was still two or three leagues off. We passed some romantic spots, particularly where a fine bridge is thrown across a rapid and clear stream, at the bottom of a deep glen, down and up the sides of which we were compelled to climb. We encountered several small villages in our way, and every spot which a plough could reach was carefully cultivated.

At last Mourça appeared crowning the ridge of a hill before us; but we had a broad valley to cross, and many a turn to make, before we could reach it. We had now arrived near the boundaries of the wine-district, and passed a large building, formerly a distillery, belonging to that bane of commerce, the Wine Company. The interior of the town was far from equalling the promise of its excessively romantic appearance at a distance, nor were we better pleased with the large dreary inn, which we were assured was the best in the place. We had taken more than eight hours to perform the distance: nominally it was five leagues; and considering we were constantly obliged to dismount, and lead our horses down the hills, it was probably not much more.

R—— felt so unwell that we determined to proceed no further, and therefore commenced an examination of the capabilities of the estalagem. "Are these the only rooms you possess?" I asked the estalajadeiro, as he shewed us into a large barn-like place, the walls of rough unhewn stone, without a touch

of whitewash; a wooden partition dividing off a part, which contained two beds, none of the windows being glazed.

"Sim, Senhor, and fine airy apartments they are," he answered, bowing; "and if you do not like them I beg you will seek others; but you will find none that can suit you better."

What we might at another time have done, I know not, but as the rain began to pour down in torrents, we were glad to remain under shelter, so we made a virtue of necessity, and told the civil host we would consent to be his guests.

The bed-room, it appeared, was occupied by a rather gigantic couple—a Spanish musician and his wife, who most unwillingly turned out for our accommodation. They afterwards made this abdication a plea for not paying any rent for the chamber, which of course created a violent altercation between all the parties concerned. It concluded the next morning by their being sent to seek lodgings elsewhere. The landlord, as is generally the case in country-inns in Portugal, followed a second calling, having a shoemaker's shop below the sitting room. There was also a venda, and the stables under the house, the united odours ascending from which were far from agreeable. While R—— went to bed, I sat as usual in the kitchen, whence I could carry on a conversation with him through the thin partition. Having dismissed our active and obliging attendant, Luis, I engaged another *faca*, the name given to the little ponies of the country, and then following R——'s example, went to bed.

As the kitchen was inhabited by a tribe of fowls, the sultan of whom was of a most noisy disposition, I was awoke long before daylight by his loud crowing. He had posted himself, I found, close to my ear. "Cock-a-doodle-doo!" he pertinaciously sung, till I jumped up, lighted the lamp, and in revenge called up all the household. I might have insisted on having him made into broth for breakfast; but I considered it was the bird's nature to crow, and contented myself with the revenge I had already taken on his owners.

The sun was up in the heavens before we had breakfasted, and my sick beast had been re-shod; then the faca wanted some nails in his shoes, so that our early rising was of little avail in forwarding us on our way. We were once more blessed with a fine day, and though the roads were for some distance execrable, the views were excessively beautiful. A youth accompanied us, to take back the faca, telling us he knew the way perfectly. He boasted much of the powers of the beast, and of the wonderful journeys it had performed; but sundry suspicious marks on the neck told plainly that his usual occupation was to carry a pack and cargo. On leaving Mourça, the road was so bad that we were obliged to walk down to a bridge, which carried us across one of the many romantic streams running into the Douro. We then passed some magnificent chestnut-trees, the fruit of which having burst through its green prickly husk, lay scattered in abundance on the ground—and our attendant filled his pockets with the nuts, to serve for his breakfast. We soon over-

took Josè with the baggage-mule and sick horse, at a spot where the road ran along the edge of a deep ravine.

"How high, my poor black steps," I observed. At that instant hearing our horses he jumped on one side, and his hind feet going over the precipice, he would have fallen into the torrent had not Josè urged on the powerful mule, to which his halter was fastened, and dragged him out again. The unfortunate beast had gone completely blind. I could not endure to see my once pretty and active steed, now following behind the mule, lifting high his feet at each faltering step he made, and appearing every instant as if he must fall down and die; so we rode on, telling Josè to follow us to Regoa. I never saw him again, though, wonderful to relate, he reached Oporto alive, and for a short time recovered his sight; but after a few weeks his illness returned, and he breathed his last.

We halted to bait our animals at the village of Villa Verde, beyond which we soon discovered that our attendant knew not an inch of the way: we therefore determined to trust to our own sagacity in finding it out. Passing through one or two villages, we ascended a wild uncultivated mountain, on the top of which we trotted for some distance over a level surface, till we came to a small chapel, whence we obtained a fine view of the lofty range of the rugged Marão; many a rich valley and vine-clad hill intervening. We then descended to the pretty village of St. Martins, situated in a fertile and lovely district.

Passing across the valley we again ascended, and trotted for two leagues on a good bridle-path, along the brow and over the summit of a hill, till we reached the outskirts of the wine-district.

From our elevated position we enjoyed a most magnificent view over a wild ocean of vine-covered mountains, embracing full half of the wine-country; the course of the Douro marked among them by its rugged and precipitous cliffs, while across a rich valley about five miles distant was Villa Real, behind which, like a dark giant, rose the mighty Marão. Our map of this part of the country was worth nothing; for while we fancied we were close upon Regoa, we were yet far from it. Upwards of an hour did we continue to descend, among vineyards, sometimes over a fine broad well-paved road; in other places, where it had been allowed to go to ruin, at considerable risk of falling into the deep ruts and holes. We passed through several villages, at each of which when we inquired for Regoa we were told it was but half a league off; yet the retreating end of this half league we could not manage to reach. There were scattered over the hills, and in the valleys below us, a number of very neat and pretty houses, some of them of considerable size, belonging to the wealthy proprietors of the neighbouring vineyards, and far superior to any we had seen in the more eastern districts of the Douro. At last we found ourselves on the banks of the Douro, near the mouth of a stream called the Corgo, which separates the upper from the lower country. Fording it, we continued for half

a mile along the edge of the river, till we entered the town of Regoa. Here we took up our abode at a very tolerable hotel, kept by a widow and her two sons, and which, after the wretched ones we had been accustomed to, appeared most luxurious.

On inquiry, we found, to our disappointment, that the last of our English acquaintance had left for Oporto two days before: we therefore desired one of the landlords to hire a boat to take us down the next morning. It was nearly dark when we reached Regoa, though the whole distance we had performed during the day was but seven leagues, and nearly all the time we had pushed on as fast as the ground would allow us.

We were much pleased with the behaviour of the landlady's son, when contrasted with that of the one at Villa Flor; for though so well dressed that we expected he would not condescend to work, his manners were most respectful, and doffing his coat, he brought in our dinner, and waited on us all the time himself. The charge, too, was not more than at the miserable inns where we had before rested. The rooms were clean, airy, and neat.

We were aroused an hour before dawn by the boatmen who came to convey our luggage; for we found, much to our satisfaction, that Josè had arrived with it after we had gone to bed. This last act of Josè's redeemed much of his previous conduct, so we parted on good terms; he having to conduct the two horses and mule by land to Oporto. We had just sufficient light to see our way to the boat; but even

at that early hour many of the shops were open, as we passed, accompanied by the landlord, to the quay.

The crew of the boat consisted of four men and a boy, the latter of whom did more work than all the others. The awning, formed of a sail and a mat stretched on some willow-wands arched over the boat, was badly secured, and consequently blew off during the first gust we encountered: we managed however to secure it again before the rain came, which afterwards visited us in a deluge.

The scenery along the banks, after leaving the wine-district a short distance below Regoa, is wild and beautiful in the extreme, approaching in one or two spots to grandeur; and though there is a certain degree of sameness in the views, there is an abundance of excitement on passing the rapids, or leaps, as they are well called. Here the water, in a confined space, rushes between high cliffs, over rugged rocks; the frothy waves leaping high, and dashing into the boat, as, tossed up and down, she darts through them. These are nervous moments; for black rocks shew their threatening heads on every side, and a blow on them would in a moment send the boat to destruction; but a skilful hand guides the long snake-like helm—the bark seems hastening to her doom, when a touch of the tiller, and again she shoots away from the shore, and the danger is passed.

As we glided down the stream, we examined each bank, regretting that a fine broad road has not been, long ago, cut on either side, which might, if funds could be found for the purpose, without difficulty be done.

At present, there is only a track affording a precarious footing to the men who drag up the boats when the wind is unfavourable. If a good carriage-road were cut along the banks to Regoa, such as for several hundred miles runs along the side of the Rhine, I doubt not numbers of visitors would flock to the country to behold the lovely scenery, which the difficulties, and inconveniences in the way at present debar them from enjoying. It would also prove the source of a vast addition of wealth, by increasing the traffic on the river, between the highest point and Oporto. It is now a tedious journey of two days from Oporto to Regoa through Amarante, whereas, with a road along the river, a coach would easily perform the distance in a day; but I fear that the present generation will not see the work performed.

About eight leagues from Oporto the river Tamega falls into the Douro, at a place called Entre ambos os Rios, and here the stream widens considerably; the banks having a softer and more cultivated appearance: there is, indeed, less grandeur, but more beauty. In the course of the day we were visited by some violent storms, during the first of which our boatmen ran the boat on shore, some getting under the awning, and others producing large red cotton umbrellas to shelter themselves from the rain. Fancy boatmen of any other country except China with umbrellas! After waiting a time, and seeing no prospect of the rain ceasing, we insisted on continuing our course. Our amusement was then great to see

some of them holding the umbrellas over the heads of those who were rowing; for I must observe we had taken two additional hands on board as passengers.

The *araies* or master of the boat, being both an invalid and a lazy rascal to boot, wasted a second half hour on shore, during a fall of rain, so that it grew dark long before we arrived at Oporto. He also wished us to remain all night at some wretched village on the banks, but we had determined to reach home that night; and notwithstanding all his remonstrances, we made him push off again into the stream, threatening not to pay him if he refused. When he saw we were not to be imposed on, he was civil enough; indeed, with characters of his description among the Portuguese I have been always able to obtain obedience by firmness.

The clouds now cleared off, the stars shone forth, and our boatmen breaking out into loud song, we glided down between the dark mysterious banks. At last the lights of the city greeted our sight, and just then we were hailed from the shore by a custom-house guard, who obliged us to touch for an instant, but delayed us not longer than he could avoid, nor attempted to open a single package. This, I must remark, was the first time we had met with a custom-house or guard of any sort since we left the confines of Spain; so, as may be supposed, smuggling into Portugal is a matter of no great danger or difficulty. I wish that in England the necessity of following the abominable system of examining the luggage of newly-arrived tra-

vellers were abolished, by placing duties on such articles of great consumption only as might afford a sufficient revenue to the government.

We paid about two pounds for the hire of the boat; no great sum, considering the labour of again dragging it up the stream. After rowing with but slight intermission for fifteen hours, the men and boy were now eager to carry up the luggage to our houses, in the hopes of gaining a little more pay. Our boat was flat-bottomed, with a rising pointed bow, a long oar for a rudder, and a high platform on which the helmsman stood—one of the smallest used to carry wine down to Oporto, but now fitted up roughly for our accommodation with a bench, some clean straw and an awning.

I saw R—— safe to his friend's house, and then returned to my own, in a finer state of health than I had enjoyed for years; and we both agreed that, leisure and strength permitting, we would, in the following summer, take a longer gallop through the Peninsula.

In the next three Sketches I shall impart to my readers the information I possess respecting the Port Wine Trade, a description of the various qualities of Port Wine, with advice for the choice of a stock.

SKETCH XXX.

The Port Wine Trade. Port Wine at first used as a Medicine in this Country. Original Location of the Wine Manufacture on the Banks of the Lima. Greatly increased Consumption about the Middle of the last Century. Establishment of the Wine Company in Portugal. Its Abuses. Abolished by Dom Pedro. Selection of Wines for Exportation. Statistics of the Trade. High Character of the British Mercantile Houses at Oporto.

In describing, as I have attempted to do, the northern provinces of Portugal, I must not omit to give a short account of the chief article of their foreign commerce; though it is a subject but little calculated to afford any interest to the generality of my readers.

I cannot learn the year when Port Wine was first introduced into England, though I believe about two or three centuries ago only it was used as a medicine, and sold for that purpose in the shops of the apothecaries. It was at that time produced on the romantic banks of the Lima, a river running into the sea at Viana, where the first British merchants settled, and whence they shipped it to England.

In those days the wine was made in small vats, holding only two or three pipes each, and just sufficient brandy was added to preserve it till it arrived at its destination, where, whilst fresh and green, it was at once consumed from the cask, without being kept in bottle. However, it being discovered that the vines on the banks of the Douro produced a richer and far more generous wine, than that made from the grapes growing on the former river, the three or four British mercantile houses engaged in the trade removed to

Oporto, whence they shipped off such wine as they could buy, with little attention as to its quality. At last experience taught them that the flavour of the wine improved by proper treatment; and from that time its qualities being justly appreciated in England, its consumption rapidly increased, so that in 1749, nearly one hundred years ago, 22,738 pipes were exported to that country. That quantity would probably have yet become greater, had not the minister Carvalho, afterwards Marquis of Pombal, whose mercantile regulations were ever formed on very mistaken notions, imposed the most withering restrictions on its production, under the idea that by diminishing the quantity he should keep up the price, and improve the quality. On pretence that the Douro farmers adulterated their wine, a Company of Inspectors was established, with the most despotic powers, who could order a vineyard to be rooted out, by whose decision such or such wine was alone allowed to be exported, and who possessed the privilege of selecting as much as they required for themselves, at their own price.

To prove the necessity of a Company various letters were published by the minister's orders, "professing to be written by the commissaries of the English houses at Oporto to their veteran brethren in the Douro, complaining of various poisonous adulterations in their wines; to which the latter responded, that they were obliged to do so because the English merchants required that sort of wine." These letters were and have ever been considered apocryphal; but

no one dared to contradict the despotic minister, who held them in his hand, and declared them genuine.

The Company was established in 1756, and a rebellion in Oporto was the consequence, which was crushed with the most sanguinary tyranny.

The measures of the Company were far from increasing the exportation of Port wine, as five years after its establishment, in 1761, only 18,281 pipes were shipped to England, though during those five years we had been waging war with France, and of course all French wines were excluded from our markets. In the following year the exportation was increased to 27,085 pipes, but then Great Britain had fitted out a large fleet for the West India expedition, and every ship was supplied with Port wine. Had not therefore the wines of France been *excluded* from the English market, the exportation of Port wine, would, by means of the Company, have decreased, rather than increased, because through their conduct the wine became dearer to the English consumer. That they effected no improvement in the quality of the wine we may conclude, or assuredly in fourteen years the consumption, with so many advantages, would, although the wine cost more, have increased to a far greater extent than it did.

One class of people benefitted by the Company, and only one, namely, those who held posts in it, for they made their fortunes; and such posts therefore were more eagerly sought for than any honourable

office in the state. Each successive minister found the eggs of gold far too precious to consent to kill the goose.

This abominable monopoly, more injurious even to the farmer than to the merchant, but extremely prejudicial to the interests of both, was at length, by Dom Pedro abolished, as one of the most inestimable favours he could grant to the people who had so bravely fought to place the crown of Portugal on his daughter's head. Indeed, its suppression was but an act of justice, which the people demanded as their right.

Unfortunately for the country, the taste of the delicious plums enjoyed by the monopolists has not yet passed from their palates, and many strenuous attempts have been made by the old members to restore it, with all its former powers. This has been violently opposed, though a Company with the former title has been established, possessing no monopoly however, but certain privileges, with the authority to approve such wines as they think fit for the English market.

The vintage of 1843 was considered a very bad one, the whole produce being 72,462 pipes. Of these, 18,002 pipes were approved for the English market, 15,714 were placed in the second quality list, 17,166 in the third, and 21,580 were pronounced refuse, to be consumed only in the low taverns, or to be distilled into brandy. During the year 1843 only 21,244 pipes of Port wine were shipped to England, a considerable deal of it probably of the fine vintage of 1840, which shews a great falling off from former years. Of the

vintage 1844, 21,238 pipes were approved as of the first quality, and by an after division of them, 14,000 only are permitted to be shipped for the English market, the produce being 66,566 pipes in all. During the year 25,493 pipes were exported to the United Kingdom. America takes some annually, some go to the Continent, and a few hundreds have been sent to our Australian colonies, to our East India possessions, and to China. Altogether, the export for 1844 was only 8453 pipes, exclusive of that to the United Kingdom.

The system of approving wine sounds very well, and by it we may fancy in England that we should have all the good, and the rest of the world all the inferior wine; but it is notorious, that though the best wine is generally approved, that very good wine is often pronounced unfit to be exported to Great Britain, and that yet much bad wine is sent to that country. The Company therefore do not benefit the trade, though by imposing such restrictions they injure it, by keeping up the price of Port wine, and allow in the mean time *the taste for other wines to increase in England.*

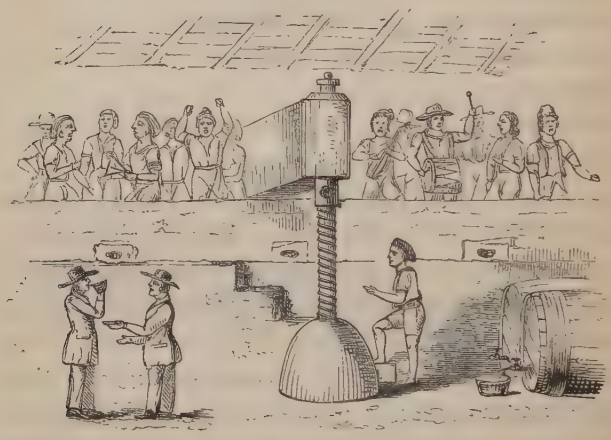
The object for which this false scarcity is created is to reduce the stocks of the native holders of wine in Villa Nova, whereby the price is for the time kept up, though ultimately they themselves will lose by the English refusing to drink their old worn-out wines.

I have said enough to shew the pernicious effect of this system, which, in spite of all warning, the Portuguese government so blindly pursue.

There are rather more than twenty old-established English mercantile houses in Oporto, of the greatest respectability and credit, who each ship from 500 to 1000 pipes annually, and one or two whose shipments have exceeded 2000 and 3000; but besides these, the list of shippers is swelled by numerous other houses, who are engaged in different branches of commerce.

I must pay a tribute which I consider due to the British merchants of Oporto. I believe that there is not to be found a more gentlemanly, honourable set of men in any of the mercantile communities in other parts of the world, than are the gentlemen of the British Factory; though a person, who has lately written about the Port Wine Trade, has, with most reckless disregard of truth, ventured to asperse their character.

SKETCH XXXI.



The Wine Press.

Concerning a Pipe of Port Wine. Soil and Situation most suitable for the Grape. Mode of planting the Vine. The more important Operations in its Culture. Anxiety in regard to the Weather. Season of the Vintage. Great number of People employed. Critical Period in the Fermentation of the Juice. The Addition of Brandy indispensable—and why. Purchase of Wines by the Oporto Merchants. Its Transport to the Lodges of Villa Nova. Time in Pipe, and Mode of Exportation.

It is surprising how many people are employed, and what care and attention is bestowed on a Pipe of Port Wine, before it reaches England. Many years must pass from the first outlay of capital, before the actual consumer repays it; so that we cannot be surprised at the high price it costs.

The district of the Douro in which the vine was first grown consists of undulating ground, or steeply-

swelling hills, composed of a red clayey soil, and commences about fifty miles from Oporto. It is now considered a thin, light-coloured wine, without body or strength, much of it being condemned for tavern-consumption, and a small quantity only being approved by the Company for exportation to England.

It was at last discovered that the most advantageous situations for the growth of the vine were on the steep sides of the rocky mountains, exposed to the full force of the sun's rays; and it is truly surprising to see the spots brought under cultivation—now the most valuable in the country—which had previously, since the formation of the world, remained in sterile grandeur. Terraces, a few feet wide, have been cut in the sides of lofty mountains, rising one above another from the water's edge to near the summit. Walls four to five feet high are built to keep in the soil, which is composed of the chips of the clayey slate or limestone broken from the rock, the *débris* of which contributes much to retain the necessary moisture. The general appearance of the wine-districts I have already described.

Suppose the side of a mountain thus prepared, at the expense of much labour and capital, the vineyard is planted in the autumn, after the vintage is concluded, by taking cuttings from the old vines and placing them flat down, the butt ends covered with earth, till they take root, when they are placed two feet deep in the ground, at about three feet apart. These vines take four to six years before they bear well: in the mean time they require much attention, many of them dying, notwithstanding all the care bestowed on them.

Of the various operations gone through, the following are the most important.

First, beginning with the wine-maker's new year. As soon as the vintage is concluded, the vines then having a vast tangled mass of long thin shoots, all these branches are cut off, except the one which sprouted from the branch, which in like manner remained from the sprout of the previous year. The next year all the shoots are cut off except one, of which a foot remains, and on the following year all are cut off, except the chief one which sprouts from that one, and so on.

Secondly. When the intervals between the vines are too great, two or three long shoots of the old vine, and still attached to it, are bent down into holes dug for them, the tips only being left above the earth. Vines thus planted bear the following year.

Thirdly. The next work to be done is to cut trenches between the vines, and to cast up the soil round them. Twice after this the ground is thrown up, and loosened round the vines, and all weeds are destroyed.

The walls must then be repaired, and new ones constructed on the sides of the mountains, or the rain would quickly wash all the soil from the vineyard. For some time, also, women and children are employed in picking off the insects from the vines, and otherwise cleaning them.

All these operations are concluded before the end of January.

Little more attendance is now required till the vintage. The vines put forth their leaves, the grapes appear, and are watched anxiously by the farmer,

as their rosy skins swell out with luscious juice. Then every change in the sky is noted, and all pray that no rain may fall to rot the tender skins, and fill the presses with water instead of wine. If clouds appear, the more timid commence gathering their grapes before they are fully ripe, the more sagacious, or bolder, allow their grapes to hang, in hopes of the return of sunshine. The time at which the vintage commences varies, therefore, in different years about a month—from the early part of September to the middle of October. At that period there are 20,000 Gallegos employed in the district, and about 10,000 Portuguese, men, women, and children. As soon as the vintage is over the Spaniards return to their own homes, each man with from twenty to thirty shillings in his pocket, which he has received as wages.

When once the vintage has commenced, time is invaluable. The vineyards are crowded with persons, some plucking the sound grapes and filling large hampers with them, others separating the rotten or dry bunches, while the Gallegos are employed in carrying the baskets down the steep sides of the hills on their backs. The presses are stone tanks, raised high from the floor, about two to three feet deep, and from twenty to thirty square. A boy stands in the centre, and rakes the grapes as they are thrown in, so as to form an even surface. When full, twenty to thirty men with bare feet and legs jump in, and to the sound of guitars, pipes, fiddles, drums, and of their own voices, continue dancing, or rather treading, for forty to fifty hours, with six hours intervening between every

eighteen, till the juice is completely expressed and the skins perfectly bruised, so as to extract every particle of colour. It is found necessary to leave in the stalks, in order to impart that astringent quality so much admired in Port wine, as well as to aid fermentation.

After the men are withdrawn, the juice, the husks, and stalks, are allowed to ferment together from two to six days; the husks and stalks then rise to the top, and form a complete cake. By this means the colour is still further extracted from the skin. It is a very critical time, much depending on the judgment and practice of the superintendent as to the right moment to draw off the liquor; for so active is the fermentation, that it may be, if allowed to remain too long in the press, completely spoiled. Nothing but long experience can enable a person to judge on this point, and many young merchants who have attempted to do so have had cause to repent their interference with the farmer's business.

The taste of the wine before drawn off into the *tonels* is sweet, nauseous and sickening, and it is of a dark muddy colour, so that one can with difficulty believe it can ever become the bright sparkling and astringent fluid it appears in the course of two or three years.

The tonels or vats into which the wine is drawn are in a building on a lower spot than the one which contains the press, a channel leading from it to them. They contain frequently thirty pipes each.

The period when the wine is thus drawn off is the time when the rich and generous qualities of the

grapes are to be retained, or lost, never to be restored. From the rich nature of the Douro grape, the fermentation once begun will not stop of its own accord (even when the wine is drawn off from the husks and stalks) till it has caused it to become a bitter liquid, almost, if not entirely undrinkable, and useless, and finally, vinegar. To retain therefore those much prized qualities, it is absolutely necessary to add brandy at the very critical moment, so difficult to decide, before that stage which produces the bitterness commences. Brandy always has been, and always must be, added to the richer and finer wines, or from their very nature they overwork themselves, and, exhausting their own strength, are destroyed.

The grapes from which the rich luscious Port wine is produced, become, when hung up in the sun to dry, complete masses of sugar. This excessively saccharine matter, possessed only by those grapes growing in the positions most exposed to the sun's rays, gives that rich and fruity flavour of which the best Port alone can boast. With the poorer and more watery grapes the fermentation, not being so violent, will work itself out, and the little saccharine matter they contain completely disappearing, a dry light wine is the produce, which, though requiring brandy, requires less to preserve its good qualities, for the very reason, that there are fewer good qualities to preserve. Such is the case with regard to the wines of Bordeaux. I do not mean to say that they do not possess good qualities, but that being of a lighter nature than the best Port, from the cooler climate or nature of the

soil in which they are produced, the fermentation is not so violent, nor do they exhaust themselves from their own strength. No brandy is therefore requisite, and that delicious liquor Claret is the produce; a successful imitation of which it has been vainly attempted to produce in Portugal.

As the people of warm climes are of warmer temperaments, and more easily excited, than those of cold ones, so it is with the productions of the soil; and this should be considered by those who desire to have Port wine without brandy. Every respectable merchant in Oporto declares that it cannot be shipped to England without a certain quantity of brandy to preserve its quality, and that those persons who pretend to do so most grievously deceive their correspondents. Even the commonest wine of Portugal, called *Vinho Verde*, or green wine, will only keep a year without brandy, after which it becomes vinegar.

Many persons, ignorant of the facts I have stated, fancy that because Claret keeps without brandy, much more so ought Port, from being a stronger wine; whereas we see that the contrary is the case. It must not be supposed, however, that because brandy is put into the wine, it there remains. In reality, it evaporates in the course of a very short time, in hot weather especially; and consequently by the time the wine is drunk its strength has been in no way increased; on the contrary, it has been diminished by age.

I hope by this short explanation I have shewn that the charges brought against the Oporto mer-

chants, of overloading their wines with brandy, and sweetening them with sugar, are utterly false and scandalous, as I fully believe them to be; though such statements were put forth in a report published by order of the Board of Trade, and in another place refuted by me.

No physician can watch a royal patient with greater care than does the farmer his wine-tonels, on which his whole revenue is probably depending. He locks them carefully up, attending to them constantly with his factor and other servants, who all taste and give their opinion; nor will he allow a stranger to see them till their good qualities are developed. Many of the English houses rent vineyards for a term of years, and have the wines made under their own superintendence, though, as I observed before, it is a dangerous system if followed by those who are not well practised in the management of wine.

The Company taste the wines in January, and according as they think fit, issue tickets of approval, or otherwise. The fair commences in the middle of February, previously to which the merchants hasten up to the Wine Country, where they have establishments, and, accompanied by their head clerks, commissaries, and coopers, mounted on the backs of mules, and attended by a troop of servants on foot, they visit the different farms where the wine is kept. The wine is tasted from a silver saucer, with an elevation in the centre, which exhibits its colour; and as they taste they make notes of the quality of each

tonel in their books, which they compare on their return home. Sometimes the purchase is concluded on the spot, but generally the farmer proceeds to the merchants' houses to make his bargain.

The purchase of wine requires all the judgment and knowledge of the merchant, his credit and profit depending on the work of a few days. It being concluded, he returns to Oporto. The wine is now drawn off into pipes, under the superintendence of a commissary, and is carried down over the most execrable roads to the river's side, in carts drawn by oxen. It is then embarked in large boats, carrying seventy pipes each, and brought to Villa Nova. Next it is stored in the merchants' vaults, or rather lodges, as they are called, they being entirely above ground. Here the wines are racked and lotted according to their respective qualities. The greatest care is now necessary in their treatment; they requiring a little more delicate brandy.

In about two years, or even in less, the fine wines of any superior vintage are considered in a fit state to ship to England. The older wines are kept from four to eight years in pipes, before they are shipped, according to the quality required. I have some wine which I drink every day at dinner of the vintage 1786, still perfectly sound and vinous. It has been doubtlessly refreshed with later vintages, and constant attention paid to it, or it probably would not have kept for so long a period. Such wine is of course invaluable.

The expense of keeping wine in the stores is

very great, owing to the high rent, and the number of people employed about them: the evaporation also is enormous, amounting in some lodges to upwards of a hundred pipes every year, about 3 per cent. In some of the chief establishments nearly two hundred persons are employed, including coopers, wine-carriers, carters, boatmen, and others.

From the stores, the wine in pipes, hogsheads, and quarter-casks, is again carted down to the river, paying a heavy export-duty. On arrival in England it is either bonded, or taken at once to the wine-merchants' vaults, to be put into bottle.

SKETCH XXXII.

Difficulty of obtaining a Bottle of good Port. Advice thereon. Unfounded Prejudice in respect to the Colour of the Wine. Not naturally dark. Pleasant Story about the Importation of Africans. Hints to assist in the Selection of a Pipe of Port Wine. Difference of Taste stands in the way of giving positive Directions. What sorts to avoid. A parting Word on the Subject at large.

A BOTTLE of really good Port is more easily drunk than found; and as it is a matter in which most of my readers are more or less concerned, I will give them a few hints which may prove useful in selecting it.

The first advice I offer is to go to a long-established, respectable wine-merchant, either in London or one of the principal towns in your county, and you will be tolerably certain of getting genuine good wine. The *shortest* time Port wine, to give it fair play, ought to be kept in bottle, is two years; four improve it more, and in six it reaches perfection. Wine-merchants often commit a great fault in keeping wine too long in wood, before bottling it, without racking or paying it any attention, whereby its flavour is much impaired. The old wine shipped from Oporto ought to be bottled in the following autumn or spring.

As affairs now stand, with the heavy duties and charges, the consumer must pay a high price for really good wine.

In selecting your wine, the first thing to be considered is, What do you like? for there are as many sorts of wine, and as many different tastes, as there

are political parties in the Peninsula. The surest method is to desire your wine-merchant to send you wine from his most approved bin, and if you do not like it, try another class till you are satisfied. If, however, you are determined to be guided entirely by your own taste, note the following remarks.

By age alone ought Port wine to be classed. Of the different qualities, first stands the old tawny Port, grown old in cask; bright as a ruby, but its ruby colour has flown, and it is perfectly dry and soft: if those qualities are not combined, do not confide in it. It is like a young man with a white wig on to make him look old for some sinister purpose. It ought to have spirit—no vapidness, and a slight aroma. Then, if your wine-merchant assures you that it was shipped to him by one of the first Oporto houses, and that he has had it bottled in his cellar five or six years, you may feel confident that you are drinking a very fine wine, which is well worth the price you pay for it.

The next is, what is bottled younger, but kept afterwards as long, or longer than the other. It ought to be of a bright sparkling ruby: it need not be dark—do not care about colour—with a perfect fragrance when the bottle is uncorked, both dry and soft, with a fine fruity flavour. Fancy the essence of a hot-house grape. This sort of wine is, I think, nearer perfection than any other. Combine your own taste with that of your wine-merchant, who ought to know more about the matter than anybody else.

Once for all, if you wish to drink unadulterated

wine, do not buy it except of the most respectable wine-merchants, for I verily believe the consumption of Port wine has decreased more from the ignorance or knavery of petty wine-dealers than from any other cause. Such persons the Oporto merchant would not trust with a pipe of his wine—with Benecarlo, brandy, and sugar, these fellows make up what they sell as Port. A gentleman drinking this stuff vows he will never again touch Port.

The two sorts of wine I have mentioned above ought to be kept for summer use, as a stouter wine is preferable in the winter. But the wine most suited to the fogs and cold of the English autumn, winter, and early spring, (rather a large portion of the year!) is the rich, generous, rosy wine, such as that of the famed vintage of 1834, and of the late ones of equal credit of 1840 and 1842. Let it be known that wine of a very dark colour when it arrives in England, is more apt to lose colour than that of a lighter and natural hue. The colour proceeds alone from the skin of the grapes, as before observed; now if that skin is of a reddish hue the wine cannot be black. Many persons seem to have an idea that the juice of the Portugal grape is dark, whereas it is in reality perfectly colourless. When therefore they insist on having more colour in the wine, they ask really for more of the substance which forms the skin. The darkest-skinned grapes do not make the most delicate wine; indeed, a very dark colour and great delicacy are almost incompatible. That the grapes when much pressed till the very stalks are smashed to pulp, and

every particle of colouring-matter extracted, cannot produce delicate wine, stands to reason: let them be pressed as much as possible, there are very few grapes, and those of a tasteless, watery nature, which can give a black colour to wine.

If the merchants insist on pleasing their consumers by having very dark wine, the farmers must put colouring matter into it, yet in vain; for it is hopeless attempting to vie with Warren's jet blacking! that must always gain the day. A few ship-loads of negroes from the coast of Africa might answer still better—not to be mashed and fermented, but to tread the grapes. The following story, for the truth of which I cannot pretend to vouch, proves that there are means of giving colour, if people insist on having it:—

"Formerly, the grapes of the Douro having a thin skin, the wine produced was of a fine dark ruby, which was then much admired by all consumers; but once, some dark tasteless dye having by accident fallen into a tonel, the wine was pronounced so much superior to anything that had before been seen, that no other than dark wine would suit the taste of the day. What was to be done? the grapes were pressed to the utmost, but the skins refused to give forth any further colouring matter. The wine was of a beautiful ruby colour, but it was not black enough. It was considered that through the ignorance of the farmers the best qualities were left behind. Nothing would please them. At last it occurred to an intelligent farmer, who was always ready to adopt any novelty

which he thought might be advantageous, that he had seen the fermenting juice of the grape have a very wonderful effect on the human skin. In truth, he had observed that the Gallegos employed in dancing in the wine-presses, went in with very dark brown legs, and came out, though stained with wine, very white and clean when washed in water. He reasoned that if brown becomes white, so probably will the wine extract a black colour. He forthwith therefore dispatched a vessel to the kingdom of the Ashantees, on the coast of Africa, where the natives are the darkest, and she returned freighted with a cargo of blacks. The inhabitants of Oporto wondered when they saw so many black men landed from the ship; but the farmer kept his counsel—he merely observed that he thought they would work more cheaply in his vineyards than would Gallegos. During the vintage he closed the gates of his estate against everybody. People wondered what he was about: they suspected he was adulterating his wine. Now it is well-known that the darkness of the negro race is caused by a black substance contained in the epidermis, or the outer skin of the body. The same is the case with the grape, as I have before observed. It is also well-known that the violent fermentation of a vinous fluid will extract the colour from any substance steeped in it, as it does from the skin of the dark grape. I say no more.

"The fair took place, the farmer's tonels were approved by the Company, and he sold his *dark-coloured* wine at a very high price. His Ashantees

wore trousers and socks till the next vintage. Nobody guessed the fact. How should they? The following year the wine was of an equally good colour, and as the competition for its purchase consequently was great, it sold for an enormous sum. The Ashantees, to the surprise of every one, afterwards wore gloves, which met the sleeves of their coats. On the third year the wine was even better than before, for it had more *flavour* and *body*. On the fourth, the blacks had disappeared, no one knew whither, though in their stead a very fine set of perfectly white men were seen, who could not speak Portuguese. Still everybody was in the dark, till the farmer sent for a fresh supply of negroes, when the truth transpired, and the Royal Wine Company strictly forbade the nefarious practice, under pain of the forfeiture of the estate. They however applied for, and obtained the monopoly themselves, offering as an excuse that the negroes thus washed white made better Christians. Of course, on this plea no Christian monarch could refuse their request. Now and then dreadful surmises were whispered about, but in a despotic country, as Portugal then was, no one dared utter them aloud—*only* a dead black man was never seen!

"Such, I am informed, is the Port wine the deceived British public have had palmed off on them for a long course of years! according to some of the writers on the subject. *With few exceptions* the British merchants are strongly suspected of encouraging so gross an infringement of all laws human and divine, if they do not actually import cargoes of living blacks

themselves. Indeed, now that most of the very necessary restrictions are abolished, we have strong reasons for supposing that this is not the most reprehensible method they have of adulterating their wines."

In truth, to insist on having dark-coloured wine, is much like what I have been writing above—nonsense! yet such is a sample of the attacks directed against a highly honourable, gentlemanly class of British merchants. I must beg of my readers, whenever they meet with the like, to laugh at it, as I hope they have done at my account of the Ashantees bleached white.

To return, however, to the subject of selecting wine. The next class which, though I place it third, is as valuable as the other two, the rich generous wine —I need not say, rather avoid a very dark colour, than insist on having it. Choose a bright wine, fruity and nutty, with plenty of spirit, and a degree of smoothness, but not mawkishness. Having more saccharine matter, it will sink sooner in water than will old wine; but if it sinks at once, when poured gently into a glass, do not buy it, as it is not a properly fermented wine. The above is a wine to drink after a hard day's hunting or shooting. It is a fine stomachic, and invaluable in a November fog.

To select a pipe, or a bin of wine, is a matter of consideration, and every man ought to recollect two things—the state of the weather, and the state of his own stomach. Let him choose a fine bright day, but not a cold one. He ought to have spent the previous evening quietly at home, and ought not to have drunk more than a pint of wine, or he will run a great risk of

making a mistake. If he is heated, he will like a thin vapid wine, and if he comes from the cold air, he will prefer a highly-brandied strong wine; neither of which will please him on the following day.

This is a golden rule. Few persons can form an opinion of Port wine by tasting it only once. After dinner, if you taste a dry old wine after sweets, or after drinking rich wine, the first will appear flavourless, or casky. People often wrongly condemn fine old wine, from not thinking of that fact. It must be remembered, in choosing wine from the cask, that it is seldom so soft, so bright, or so spirity, as wine in bottle.

There are many other descriptions of Port of less value, but very good; some rather coarser and rougher, others thinner and less rich, varying much according to their age; so that it is impossible to give any advice respecting them. There are also lighter Clarety wines, which are very nice when drunk new in Portugal, but requiring brandy to keep in England, else that peculiar flavour disappears, and their best quality is lost. It is absurd, in my opinion, to attempt to make the wines of Portugal like those of Bordeaux. Those who can get Claret will not drink thin Port instead, and those who cannot afford to drink the former, prefer a good stout stomachic wine, which goes the furthest. The commoner sorts, and most to be avoided, are thin stalky wines, with considerable colour, and no softness; or very dark wines, of a vapid sweet taste, yet rough and strong; or very light-coloured, almost tawny, no body or spirit, and pretending to be very old, at a low price. Doubt these

last always. They have less harm in them than have others; but they are best known by negatives, and will never improve; whereas the coarser wines may. These sort of wines are shipped frequently to the inferior class of wine-merchants; and a person desirous of abusing Port, has only, in order that he may obtain credit, to take a sample of them, and exhibit it as the stuff the Oporto merchants ship. He is thus certain, moreover, to create a prejudice against Port wine among persons ignorant of the existence of the inferior sorts above described.

I have now honestly given, to the best of my abilities, as much advice as the nature of the case will allow; and I hope my readers may find it of service.

To sum up. Decide in your own mind as to what sort of wine you require, go to an honest wine-merchant, on a fine balmy day, with a clean palate—remember, *not to care about a dark colour*, and shut your eyes when you taste. Take a dry wine first, to wash out your mouth, then the one most recommended. After sipping six samples begin to distrust your taste. Do not judge of a rich wine after a dry one, or *vice versa*, and do not be led to taste all sorts of other wines before you make your choice. I practise what I preach.

Thus, gentle readers, with many apologies I end my dissertation on Port Wine; and though it may not have been very interesting, I trust it has not proved tedious.

SKETCH XXXIII.

Start from Oporto on a visit to the Wine Districts of the Alto Douro. Time formerly consumed in this Journey. Pass through Valongo. Baltar. Penafiel. Casaes. Villa Meão. Amarante: difficult of access: much Strife hereabouts. Onward the Scenery becomes extremely wild and romantic. Quintella, or Padroens: our first day's Journey terminates. Sadly neglected Road thence to Mezão Frio, where the Wine Country commences. Regoa. Arrive at the Quinta of Batteiras. Manners, Habits, Opinions, &c. of the People. Excursion. Depressed Condition of the small Douro Farmers. Mode of testing the Qualities of the Wines. Great Injustice often committed, and consequent general Dissatisfaction. Remedies proposed. Town of Panoyas. Ancient Altars, and other Antiquities. Mansion belonging to the noble Family of Villa Real. On our Return visit some Friends at Lamego. Discuss with them the Importance of Improved Roads. Reach Oporto, much gratified with the Tour. Vale!

Early in the February of 1845, the brief winter of the mild climate of Portugal already drawing towards its termination, I set off, accompanied by my brother, to visit the wine-producing districts on the banks of the Douro, generally known by the name of the Wine Country of the Alto Douro.

As we were well acquainted with the road, our object was to get over it as fast as possible, without waiting to examine any of the interesting objects to be seen near it. We therefore sent on our baggage and a relay of horses to await us about twenty miles from Oporto, half the distance we intended to perform during the day. Forty miles is in England considered little more than a morning's ride, but on Portuguese roads, after much rain, it is nearly as much as two horses can do, during a short winter's day, without

running the risk of being knocked up; and as I have an especial dislike to riding a tired steed, I would always, if possible, secure a change, advising my friends to do the same.

The previous day had been lovely, and we were anticipating a pleasant journey, when, as the morning broke, a thick driving mist came on, which continued for some hours, directly in our faces, completely shutting out the prospects on either side.

In the times when the Oporto merchants appeared on the Exchange in bag wigs and swords, the journey to Regoa was considered a most arduous undertaking, invariably occupying three days (albeit the road was in a far better state than at present), while each night was spent in feasting and good fellowship; some six or eight gentlemen always travelling together, with three or four attendants each. Even in later years they invariably proceeded in a dignified style, at the rate of fifteen to twenty miles a day; but now each merchant goes up by himself to make his purchases when he thinks fit, and gets over the ground as fast as he can—*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*

I was anxious to ascertain the exact state of the Wine Country, which had been described to me as very deplorable, to inspect several interesting places I had not been able to reach in my former tour, and to pay a visit to some friends in Lamego; for all which purposes I had but a short time to spare.

Leaving Oporto, we passed, situated on a high rocky mound, the church of Bom Fim, a position fiercely contested during the siege of the city, and

for the defence of which the leader in the late revolutionary movement was rewarded with the title of the Baron of Bom Fim. For a short distance the road is paved, after which we found the commencement of by far the best macadamized road I have yet seen in Portugal, with the exception, perhaps, of that of Matozinhos. I was not even aware that any improvement was taking place on this road, and was therefore proportionally pleased both at the progress which had been made, and at the very admirable style in which the work is performed. Already a steep hill has been cut down, and a deep valley filled up; indeed, it reflects great credit on Monsieur Leucotte, the enterprising projector, who I hope will be amply remunerated for the outlay of his capital. It is at present intended to carry it merely as far as Penafiel; but it will probably be afterwards continued on the whole distance to Regoa, along the track of the old Wine Company's road, which has been, with the exception of two or three miles, completely destroyed, or rather, it may be said, by the most culpable and gross neglect *allowed* to fall into decay.

After several gradual ascents, about two leagues and a half from Oporto we mounted a lofty and steep hill, through a gap on the summit of which a lovely view is to be seen extending over the eastern part of the province, as far as the spurs of the gigantic Marão; a mountain we intended to climb before our return.

A rapid descent took us into the most unpic-

turesque town of Valongo, a somewhat dirty-looking place; although the bread which supplies the greater part of Oporto is made there, and the female portion of its inhabitants, who bring the bread to market, are celebrated for their beauty.

About half a mile further on we passed over a small bridge, called Ponte Ferreira, near which a sharp engagement was fought between some of the Miguelite forces and a body of Donna Maria's troops, under Colonel Hodges. A league and a half more carried us to Baltar, a large straggling village situated on even ground, with cork-trees scattered through it, and pine-groves surrounding it. We here perceived a great improvement in the style of building, the houses being composed of large hewn blocks of stone, as they are along the whole of the rest of the road to the foot of the Marão.

None of the country through which we passed is otherwise than pretty, though the most interesting part is to the east of Penafiel. From Baltar to that town is two leagues. It is situated on the sides and summit of a hill, to which a winding road led us. There are in it two or three large houses belonging to fidalgos, the windows, as usual, looking into some dirty street; but in general the dwellings are small and dilapidated. We observed a few latticed windows, like those of Braga; indeed, the narrowness and want of cleanliness of the streets give them some claim to an oriental appearance. It is to be hoped when the road is completed its wealth-bearing powers

will cause some improvements to take place. There is, for Portugal, a very tolerable inn here, formerly much frequented by merchants.

From this place we trotted on another league or more to a village called Casaes, where we found fresh horses ready saddled awaiting our arrival. Taking a slight luncheon, we rode another league through a straggling village at the foot of a hill called Villa Meão. Hence a road, once a very good one, winding along the side of a romantic valley for two leagues, conducted us to the summit of a hill, from which a view of the picturesque town of Amarante in the hollow below, and the wild ridges of the Marão beyond, burst upon our sight.

As we were riding slowly up a hill, we were startled by cries which seemed to come from out of the ground, when looking about to see whence they could proceed, we perceived a wretched-looking being ensconced in a cavern by the road-side. His dress was a collection of rags of various hues, his beard was long and matted, his locks grizzly and shaggy, and his eyes rolled wildly, as in a loud voice he petitioned us for alms, while a thick knotted stick he held between his bent knees might perhaps, on occasions, contribute to warm up the charity of the timid or solitary traveller. A little further on we perceived, sheltered in another hole, a rival in his trade, or perhaps a partner—very likely his wife—an old woman habited in a similar tattered costume, who reminded us of the dangers of the road, and of the necessity of preparing for another world by a bountiful distribution of alms!

Amarante is a town of some size, with very narrow, irregular streets, built on broken rocky ground, the wild torrent of the Tamega running through it, and forming an almost impracticable barrier to the advance of an army, were it not for a handsome stone bridge thrown over the stream. The banks of the river are formed of wild rugged cliffs, the only entrance into the town from the east being by a narrow road winding down them, with houses on each side, forming a very effective fortification. We observed numerous churches and some large convents and dwelling-houses, all in ruins, on the hill above us to our left. Some of these edifices have light colonnades in front, which give them an Italian appearance. Before crossing the bridge we saw to our left the large stone church and convent of Saint Domingos, with an elaborately-carved façade, ornamented with Corinthian pillars and statues of the saints. The walls of it facing the stream are thickly studded with the marks of shot and bullets from many a hard-contested fight.

In 1809 Amarante was plundered and almost totally consigned to the flames by a division of Soult's army under General Loison, in revenge for the severe check he received from the Portuguese forces under General Silveira, who occupied the opposite side of the river, and for many weeks succeeded in preventing the passage of the French by the bridge. The defence of this important post was confided to a Major Patrick in the Portuguese service, who gallantly performed his duty, ultimately falling a victim to his intrepidity when the French at length succeeded in

crossing another part of the stream, and attacking the patriot army in the rear.

A characteristic anecdote is told of the bravery, and at the same time the indifference to military renown, of a Portuguese volunteer. The French had succeeded in constructing the greater part of a pontoon across the stream, when General Silveira promised a large reward to any one who would destroy it. During the night a soldier offered his services; and plunging into the river with his knife in his hand, he succeeded in cutting through the ropes which held the rafts together. They were already floating down the stream before he was discovered by the enemy. The disappearance of the rafts warned the French that a foe was near; and immediately they commenced a sharp fire towards the opposite bank, which was briskly returned by the Portuguese, the daring adventurer swimming boldly on, clearly visible, but unhurt by either party. When brought before the general he was told to name his reward. "Then," said he, "let me go home to my wife and family. I have had enough of fighting for the present." As no persuasions would induce him to accept of any other recompence, his request of course was granted.

Here also, during the late civil war, the Miguelite army of the north made their last stand against the Duke of Terceira, who had marched from Lisbon to clear that part of the country.

The only outlet from the town is by a very narrow, dirty street, through which we wound our way, after-

wards twisting and turning about among the mountain-ridges for some distance, our shadows sometimes appearing before us, sometimes behind, till we crossed a mountain-torrent by a wooden bridge, which we agreed would probably before long prove a treacherous trap to some heavily-laden mule, or hapless cavalier.

A little way beyond the bridge to the right, on a rocky mound, are the remains of a once considerable fortress, to which a winding road led up, now overgrown by shrubs. It served probably to guard this pass into the province. Hence the scenery is wild and romantic in the extreme. Up, up, up we clomb, with a rocky hill to our right, and a deep rugged glen to our left, on the sides of which among the crags appeared the chestnut, the oak, and many other shrubs and trees. In two or three spots the rocks are thrown into most fantastic shapes, representing at a short distance castles, palaces, or more humble edifices; but the scenery, it must be confessed, is very inferior in beauty to that of the Pass of Salamonde. In some places the road is but little destroyed; but in others it was difficult to determine even where it had led, so completely had the winter-torrents been allowed to wash away the ground, leaving the rocks alone visible. Here and there a few cascades dashed down in sparkling sheets of foam from the heights above us, passing under some substantial stone bridges which time has spared.

It is three leagues from Amarante to the village of Quintella or Padroens, on the summit of the pass, where there is one of the best inns in Portugal, which

we reached just before sunset. Our baggage having been sent on early in the morning, we found an excellent dinner waiting our arrival; a most welcome sight after our long ride.

I have described so many bad inns in Portugal, that it is but justice to say that this one has an entrance separate both from the stable and kitchen, that all the apartments are on one floor, with large sitting-rooms and bed-rooms adjoining, and that the people are very attentive and obliging. The view from the windows down the glen is fine and wild. With these various recommendations it is a favourite resort of most travellers to the Douro. All the windows also are glazed, a luxury to be found in few inns, though at the same time it is destitute of fire-places, which are much required in this elevated and cold region.

The stupid servant neglected to call us on the following morning, offering as his excuse that we slept so soundly that he had not the heart to awake us; it was consequently nearly nine o'clock before we had breakfasted and were ready to commence our day's journey.

For nearly a league there is a continual descent down the mountain, with a deep broad glen to the left; but so completely has this once magnificent road been destroyed, that we preferred walking the whole distance, to trusting our necks to the care of our steeds. The way is literally cut up into a succession of gigantic ruts, which have become water-courses half as deep as the height of a man; though so strongly was the parapet-wall built, that it has generally re-

sisted the encroachments of time; and I should think that the whole might, at a comparatively small expense, be repaired.

The air was keen and biting, and the ground for some distance, as we proceeded down the mountain, covered with ice. Before us were a party of these highland villagers laughing and singing, on their way to a fair held at Mezão Frio, a small town above the banks of the Douro. At the foot of the mountain a handsome bridge of fine white stone has recently been constructed, affording a glaring contrast to the wretched road leading to it. Ascending another hill we passed through Mezão Frio, now crowded with the peasantry of the surrounding country, ox-carts, donkeys, and mules, laden with every variety of goods.

Here the Wine Country may be said to commence, and soon after leaving the town we came in sight of the vine-clad banks of the Douro, with its yellow waters, at this place as broad as at Oporto. For about three miles we trotted quickly along a well-cut road by the side of the river, passing numerous quintas belonging to the proprietors of vineyards, and several small hamlets, till, descending for a short distance close to the water, we reached the town of Regoa.

The views of the lofty hills both up and down the river were particularly beautiful, increased by a partial mist which concealed the harsher outlines, and threw every variety of tint over the landscape. Finding that our horses were perfectly unfit for mountain-travelling, we stopped at the inn to lunch and procure fresh

mules to carry us to the quinta in the Upper Country, where we purposed to remain some days.

This we found was the first day of the wine-fair, and consequently the house was crowded with farmers, come to sell their wines; but, unfortunately for them, there were no buyers; all the principal mercantile houses having made their purchases beforehand.

Sending back our horses, we mounted our mules, which proved very good animals, and crossing the river, we proceeded for some distance along the same path we had followed when leaving Lamego in the summer. The river being swollen by the rains of winter we were then compelled to climb up for two or three miles among the vineyards along tracks over which we could not even venture on the backs of our mules. At other times we ascended places so steep that it was with the greatest difficulty we could cling on to our saddles; and certainly none but animals accustomed to the country could have performed the work which ours did with perfect unconcern.

We had modern saddles, but our stirrups were of Moorish origin—huge wooden boxes studded with iron, and which are very useful in protecting the feet from being rubbed against the stone-walls which abound in every direction. At last descending, we passed several streams, and again crossing the river, we reached the quinta of Batteiras. Having in a previous Sketch described the scenery on the banks of the Douro, I will not again speak of it; but will confine my

observations more to the habits and manners of the inhabitants.

In the summer we had found the house very comfortable, but now we sadly missed the cheerful blaze of a fire; very few of the houses in this part of the country possessing fire-places, notwithstanding the extreme cold of the climate in winter. Instead of a fire, a large circular shallow copper-pan is brought in, filled with the burning ashes of either vine-cuttings or olive-branches, which emit no disagreeable or noxious odour. It is then placed in a wooden frame about the height of a footstool, on which the company, who sit round, wrapped in their large cloaks, place their feet. We soon learned to like the *brazieros* almost as much as our own coal-fires; but they require frequent renewal, and the ashes must constantly be stirred to keep up the heat. This plan produces none of the bad effects of common charcoal, except a degree of closeness, which a chimney would remedy; and I constantly slept with one burning in my room.

The day succeeding our arrival being Sunday, soon after daybreak the chaplain of the owner of the mansion performed mass in a little chapel attached to the house; all the labourers employed on the estate attending it. Every house of any pretension to respectability has a chapel belonging to it, so that there would be no want of religious instruction were it properly administered; but, unfortunately, too often the blind are sent to lead the blind, and the usual consequences follow. This was far from the case of the

excellent padre I speak of; and were all Portuguese priests as enlightened, liberal, and desirous of promoting religion, as he is, the country would be in a far happier state than it is.

He gave me an example of the extraordinary notions of the common people. Many of them fancy that children are born without souls, and that the object of baptism is to give them a soul, during which ceremony it descends from heaven on them. They have an idea also that Protestants are not baptized, indeed, have no religion of any sort, and that therefore they are destitute of souls; and, in consequence, will become as the beasts that perish. He told me that they were quite surprised when he assured them that we had churches, saints' days, and souls, as they had; and in his opinion we should be judged not by our ceremonies or obedience to the pope, but by our faith and actions. All the educated clergy of the country hold the same sentiments, though some persons may suppose their interest involved in representing them otherwise.

The abolition of the forced celibacy of the clergy has been much talked of lately, and many, both priests and laymen, are strongly in favour of those being allowed to marry who wish it. I feel confident that no measure would more contribute to improve the moral condition of the people than the removal of that restriction. I was speaking to an influential and much-respected fidalgo on that point. "How," he observed, "can you expect a people to be moral when the greater number of those whose duty it is to teach morality set its precepts at open defiance? and knowing what

human nature is, can you expect it to be otherwise?" To wipe out this stain the priests must be allowed to marry; for though they are not nominally so, there are few who have not their professed mistresses, and who do not speak unblushingly of their children. "We require also another change," he continued. "We must abolish the regulations with regard to fasting. We are now bound to fast through the whole of Lent, and twice every week in the year; yet how few people adhere to the rule! Some laugh at it, others think they are doing wrong, yet break it; while a very small number of the conscientious suffer. How much better would it be to make fasting discretionary, and then it might be an useful discipline!"

"But surely the pope will never allow these changes to take place," I answered.

"Oh! the holy father will do anything for money," he observed, laughing scornfully. "Or, if we have not money to spare, a little intimidation will answer our purpose as well. We will send him a humble petition, and at the same time secret advice, that if he does not comply with a good grace, we will throw off his authority, and leave him without our tribute."

These are not only the sentiments, but the very words of the gentleman who was speaking to me; and such I believe to be the general feeling throughout the country. The affections of a few, and very good men some of them are, still cling to Rome, but the mass are opposed to its interference; and I am convinced that till Portugal completely throws off that yoke, her energies will never regain their ancient vigour.

"When the clergy are allowed to marry, and when their incomes are increased, then, and not till then, can we expect them to become a respectable body of men. At present their ranks are recruited from the cobblers, tailors, and shopkeepers, who enter the church because they think that they shall thus become gentlemen, and live a life of ease," resumed my friend.

I must observe, that after the mass above spoken of was concluded, most of the people returned to their usual occupations; and buying and selling was carried on with as much briskness as on any week-day, the padre himself setting the example without scruple.

We one day took a ride along the banks of the river to a considerable distance above where I had before been, the vine-covered mountains being much more lofty and precipitous than further down; three or four substantial-looking houses perched on some narrow ledge appearing as if they would every instant slide down from their posts, and drag the whole vineyard with them. From their position they reminded me somewhat of the proud baronial castles on the Rhine, though the Douro is here not one quarter so wide as that majestic stream is, in the neighbourhood of Ehrenbreitstein for instance, though its banks are, I think, higher. We passed on the south bank the celebrated quinta of Roriz, belonging to the Baron of Villar, which is kept in the most beautiful order, and cultivated with more care than almost any other wine-producing quinta on the Douro.

The greater number of the persons employed in the vineyards are Gallegos: some remain all the year

round, others come at certain seasons, when most work is to be done. They, as well as the Portuguese labourers, receive from eightpence to fourteenpence a-day, and women, who perform the lighter work, about fourpence, which enables them to live in tolerable comfort. The hoeing work was now going forward; the implement used to turn up the earth is a two-pronged hoe of large size and weight. They work in lines of twenty together, each man on a terrace, with the overseer standing on the highest point, whereby he is enabled to obtain a perfect view of the whole party.

I was assured by some of the principal people in the country that the smaller Douro farmers are in a very wretched state, many almost starving, from being unable to sell their wines at a remunerating price; some receiving only thirty-five to forty shillings per pipe, bought to be converted into brandy. This is owing to many causes—the stagnation of the trade with England, the heavy export duties, the restrictions of the Company, and the increasing size of the vineyards of the more wealthy proprietors.

The greater number of the most intelligent men hold the system of the Company in the utmost detestation; and so furious had a large party become by the condemnation of their wines, which were in truth equally good as those approved, that they were about to burn their lodges, and drive their agents out of the country. There was however, fortunately for the peace of the kingdom, a want of combination among the farmers, which prevented them from pro-

ceeding to extremities; but should the government pursue the same injudicious system another year, I have every reason to fear the most disastrous consequences will ensue. Continued injustice, and a clearer perception of their own interests, will induce them to unite their efforts to overthrow a power which has only been exerted to injure them; and a renewal of civil strife will be the inevitable consequence, before many more vintages have passed. "The Wine Company was established with blood, and the Wine Company will be overthrown by blood!" a most influential Portuguese exclaimed to me, on receiving an account of the condemnation of some of the best wines in the Douro as unfit for the English market. This was said at a large ball in Oporto; and such was the feeling of all the leading men present who possessed vineyards in the Douro.

I have before described the Wine Company. They, the farmers, and the Mercantile Association of Oporto, select conjointly twelve tasters, who are divided into four separate boards, with a president and secretary to each, who are among them compelled to taste every tonel of wine in the district of the Douro in the course of about fifteen days; and as there are upwards of 60,000 pipes divided among from 5000 to 6000 tonels, each holding ten pipes, it may be supposed how impossible it is for them to form a decision even approaching to justice. Each board tastes about 200 samples per day, and if not exhausted at first, before the end of the time they are generally too sick to be able to perform their functions properly.

They hold their sittings in a room at Regoa, to which the samples, drawn by some of their officers are brought. Each member has four piles of tickets marked with the words "Approved," "Second," "Third," or "Refuse." He tastes the sample, which has a number attached to it, and a folded paper with the name of the owner; he then, forming his opinion, puts one of the tickets into an urn; the other tasters do the same, and the president declares such a number fit, or not fit, for the English market.

This appears a very fair way; but that no persons are able to judge of wine after tasting an hour together, is proved by the numerous gross mistakes they make. The Company themselves bought before the fair, at a high price, one or more tonels of wine, which an officer of their own considered very fine, and they afterwards condemned it as unfit to be sent to England. It was affirmed that the tasters having ascertained whence a box of samples came, approved the whole of the wines of that parish, for the sake of including the tonels of one of their friends, whose vineyards were in that parish. Nearly all the wines of another parish, considered one of the best in the Douro, were placed in the second quality, for an opposite reason. In this way about 20,000 pipes were declared fit for the English market; but the government, misled by their ignorant or interested advisers, to impart an artificial value to the stocks in Villa Nova, made a yet further separation, giving approved tickets for two-thirds of each tonel to be sent to England—just 15,000 pipes. Thus much bad wine gets the stamp of the first quality,

and much acknowledged good wine remains without tickets. The merchants, however, will only buy the good wine; for which, in addition to the purchase, they have to expend a further considerable sum for the first-class tickets.

One English House had 1000 pipes, and another 1500, really first-class wines, placed as of second quality. It may be supposed what a heavy additional impost this is upon wine intended for England; and it is not surprising that Spanish and other cheap inferior wines are consumed in England, to the gradual exclusion of those of Portugal. By these injudicious regulations the respectable merchant, who will not stoop to bribery and underhand practices, is the greatest sufferer, while the dishonest speculator manages to evade them.

A recent law enacts that all the wines intended for the English market shall be warehoused on the Villa Nova side of the river, while those for America, Africa, and Asia, must be sent to Oporto.

As a consequence of the unjust system I have described, some of the farmers receive exactly double the price that others do, even although those of the latter may be of superior quality; while a large number are unable to sell theirs at even a remunerating price.

It must not be concealed that there is a certain portion of the proprietors of the lower country who are in favour of the Company; but this arises from their looking only at their own individual interests, and not to those of the wine-district, or indeed the

country at large. I affirm that the Company is not only useless, but highly injurious to the welfare of the kingdom. It is the interest of the merchants to select the purest and the best wines (as they now do, without any reference to their being approved or separate), and there is always sufficient competition among them to keep up the price of the best wine. Were the present heavy imposts removed, the wines of less estimation, though but slightly inferior, would all be sold for much higher prices than they are at present, and shipped to England in lieu of the red wines of Spain and France, which are so very inferior, but which at present costing only 3*l.* to 4*l.* per pipe, are in England mixed with brandy and a little Port, and sold as the wines of Portugal.

It appears extraordinary to me that the Portuguese do not perceive their own interests. Instead of increasing, as it ought, day by day, their staple trade is diminishing; and instead of doing their utmost to improve it, they still follow the old system, dictated by the blindest and grossest ignorance. I spoke to a great number of proprietors. All exclaimed that they were being ruined, but scarcely one agreed as to the cause. Some said it was the fault of the Cartistas, others of the Septembristas, others of the Company; some said it was because the Company do not possess their old powers; others, again, affirmed that it was the fault of an Englishman, who has written a great deal of nonsense, and made many false and injurious statements respecting Port wine: all agreed to the fact, but none to the cause. My answer

invariably was, "Make your wine with the greatest purity and care, petition your government to abolish the Company and all restrictive laws, to take off all imposts, and to form a commercial treaty with England. Instead of quarrelling among yourselves, and remaining split into so many political parties, unite your efforts for the common good. Improve your cross-roads, and form a high road along the banks of your river into Spain, and you will have little cause to complain of poverty and distress."

"Very good advice, very good indeed," was generally the answer. "But, Senhor, you preach a doctrine which cannot be followed. We cannot do as you say."

"Then," was my rejoinder, "you must continue in your present course till you are ruined. If you will not help yourselves, no one else can help you. Your destinies are in your own hands. If you suffer, it is your own fault, and you neither deserve, nor will you gain, any commiseration."

This language was somewhat new to the ears of my auditors; but they invariably acknowledged its truth, though one and all complained of the want of some man of talent and honesty to guide them—one in whose wisdom and honour all parties could confide. I think they might, among their influential fidalgos, find the man who is both able and willing to assist them in their difficulties.

While speaking of Port wine, I must say that the British merchants have ever endeavoured to select the purest and best, and that notwithstanding all that

has been written against it, there is no other wine more pure or wholesome shipped to England.

I found the two divisions of the district, the Upper and Lower, quarrelling among themselves, each accusing the other of putting elderberry skins into their wine-presses to give colour, too much brandy to give strength, and sugar to increase the sweetness. I am sorry to say that these accusations were first made, and the quarrel fomented, by an Englishman, for his own particular purposes. The truth is, I have no doubt, that the inferior wines which are consumed in the country, or shipped to America and the Colonies, are so adulterated, to make them appear more like the best; but I am fully convinced, from the high character of the British merchants engaged in the trade, and my own actual observation, that the superior wines shipped to England are simply the pure unadulterated juice of the grape.

Notwithstanding the excessive badness and steepness of the ways, we rode about the country nearly every day of our stay, though I confess I was not sorry to continue our tour. There is a strange mixture of ornament and discomfort in most of the country-houses—silver forks and stockingless servants, rich damask coverlids and lace-trimmed sheets on hard straw mattrasses, astonish a stranger. Even the towels are trimmed with lace, though soap is not thought of; and most of the richer inhabitants sit all day long in their large cloaks in damp rooms for fear of taking cold by leaving a comfortable fire.

Even here, however, people are improving; and a friend of mine who was building a house had made a fire-place in the drawing-room, and all the bed-rooms had windows, and separate from each other.

The first point of our journey was to Villa Real, which I had not before seen. Leaving the quinta of Batteiras, we climbed an immensely high hill, with the village of Goivaens perched in a nook near the top, and passing under the famed St. Domingos do Monte Coxo, we descended into a green and smiling valley, with a sparkling stream running through it, far away from the monotonous vineyards. We had seen the clouds hanging on the mountain's top as we ascended, and as we reached the summit we found ourselves enveloped by their thick and humid mantle. We now again were blessed with a bright sunshine which soon dried our damp garments; and ascending another hill we attempted to reach the site of the ancient city of Panoyas, which we were anxious to visit. We now discovered that our arrieiro knew nothing of the road, and were wandering over the wild trackless hills almost in despair, when we encountered a countryman, dressed in a straw cloak, wooden shoes, and a hoe on his shoulder, who civilly undertook, without expectation of reward, to conduct us thither.

It was fortunate we found so good a guide, for we might have passed close to the spot without observing it. After we had crossed a stream, and ascended to the summit of a rugged mound, we found ourselves before a high rounded rock with steps cut in one side of it. "There, Senhor, is Panoyas," said our guide,

and, highly delighted with a small piece of silver, he retired.

Dismounting from our mules we ascended by the steps to the top of the rock. Shallow steps were carved all round it. In the centre is an oblong altar with a space for the officiating priests to stand, and on each side of the altar are two tomb-like hollows, with edges as if lids had fitted on to them, doubtless for the reception of the bodies of the victims. The rocks are of hard granite, and time has scarcely even rounded off the edges of these tanks or tombs. We at once pronounced this altar as owing its origin to the Carthaginians, who are said to have peopled Portugal, and that it was employed for the sacrifice of human victims. On this rock we could discover no inscription.

There were numerous other rocks of less elevation on the summit of the hill, hewn out in a similar way, though the tanks and altars were smaller, and of a square form. One has evidently been surrounded with a wall, as the marks where it joined the rock remain; a flight of steps leading up to it. Most of the rocks have Latin inscriptions on them—one as follows:—

DIIS SEVERIS LOCATIS IN HOC TEMPLO
CNEUS CAIUS CALPURNIUS RUFINUS.

There are several other much longer inscriptions, and one in unknown characters. There are altogether eight or ten altars, which probably formed one grand temple, or high place, dedicated to the Infernal Gods.

We observed several cottages near the spot, and a woman who came out of one of them, civilly to shew

us where the inscriptions were to be found, assured us they were of the time of the Moors ; pointing out two footmarks on the rock, made respectively by a male and female of that ancient people, supposed magicians. The vulgar invariably attribute all remains of past ages to the *tempo dos Mouros*.

While we were pursuing our researches, the padre of the village came up, politely offering to lead us to some other spots worth seeing. He first took us to a tomb in a garden cut in the solid rock, with places formed to contain the head and shoulders. It must have been made either for a female or a very small man. Our reverend guide told us that when opened it was full of a white substance, which looked like marble, but which was very soft, and glittered in the sun. Numerous other tombs have been brought to light, some with skeletons in them ; which of course fell to pieces on being exposed to the air. Coins are constantly discovered, and the padre made me a present of one he had lately found, with a gladiator on one side and the head of an emperor on the other, but the inscription was illegible. Marble columns, capitals, and tablets, are also frequently turned up, but the greater part of the ruins of the city were carried away to build the walls of Villa Real. The last tower was a short time ago destroyed to construct a belfry for the church, and the padre had placed a Corinthian capital on one side of the top of it, and a lump of the glittering substance found in the tomb on the other! Taking us to his house he shewed us a MS. account of Panoyas, and

offered us refreshments, which we were obliged to decline in order to proceed on our way.

We soon came in sight of Villa Real in the hollow below us, with the rock-bound Corgo running through it, and the dark frowning heights of the Serra de Marão rising on the other side. As we descended we passed a large mansion called the Casa de Matteus, belonging to the noble family of Villa Real. The house, an immense pile of two stories, is in the very worst style of Portuguese architecture, though the front, with a paved court-yard before it, and a double flight of steps leading to the chief entrance on the first story, has rather a handsome appearance. On one side stands the chapel, a building upon which the architect's skill has been lavished to better purpose, though of the usual unnameable Portuguese style. The interior also is simple and elegant.

Seeing an old man, who proved to be the chaplain, with a scull-cap on his head, looking out of a window, we asked permission to go over the house, on which he politely desired us to ascend the steps, welcoming us kindly, and insisting on conducting us round himself. In each wing are seven large rooms opening one into the other, without any other passage of communication; so that for any purpose of domestic privacy they must have been perfectly useless; and in the whole mansion there are only two small bed-rooms. The chaplain told us that the family slept in the drawing-rooms, and had their beds removed in the day-time. What a very uncivilized style of existence must have

been that of the past century in the provinces of Portugal! The ceilings are of chestnut, as are also large ornaments over each doorway, carved in the most elaborate manner; but now being destroyed by insects.

The walls are covered with a vast number of paintings, among which are some of considerable value. Many have been completely destroyed by damp, but these were, I suspect, painted in Portugal with bad colours. The best are evidently Italian, and have defied the seasons: among these is a Magdalene with a blue mantle. A Crucifixion, and the death of the Virgin Mary, are excellent. There are three pretty landscapes and some hunting-scenes—that of a tiger chased by dogs may, from its subject, be Portuguese, and is very good. Our friend the chaplain has marked upon each picture its name in white paint, which does not improve their appearance.

The garden, into which some of the rooms looked, is laid out in straight rows of walks, with hedges of box cut into shapes, several feet high and very thick.

I was delighted with our cicerone. He was a little old man, habited in the clerical dress, with a constant placid smile playing on his benignant countenance, and altogether as unlike the saturnine plotting friar of Italy as could well be imagined. He put me in mind of the features of one of the guests in a print in the standard Waverley Novels, of the drinking party in *Rob Roy*. His complexion was very fair, and his features rounded, especially his nose, which could with difficulty support his spectacles. He laughed, chirruped, joked, and took snuff, as he walked

along, exhibiting, as great treasures, several shrines in glass cases, containing infant figures of Jesus in wax, ensconced in beds of roses, and very exact representations of Paradise, formed of tinsel fountains, floral bowers, and pasteboard hills. He had been a friar of the order of Barefooted Carmelites, and had resided for some time to perform penance at the convent of Busaco, under my friend the worthy prior. With many kind words we bade the old man farewell, and descending a short distance, reached the torrent of the Corgo, over which we passed by a new, handsome, stone bridge, with rugged cliffs above us, on the summit of which the town is built.

At the best inn we found nothing to eat, but fortunately our saddle-bags contained provisions; and as soon as we had satisfied our hunger we sallied out to see the place, determining to push on to Regoa the same night.

Villa Real is comparatively a new city, and the streets are therefore rather broader than is usual in Portugal, but the houses, with the exception of a few belonging to fidalgos, are low and mean-looking. Passing a large and once very handsome convent, burnt by some soldiers quartered in it, we stood before the hospital. We were asking questions at the dispensary door, when a gentleman came up, and begged us to walk over it. The exterior is simple and handsome, yet no money has been thrown away in useless ornament. The wards are lofty and airy, and will contain, without any crowding, about a hundred patients. There are at present fifty in the house.

The beds have no divisions between them, and the women's wards are too public; in fact, though very admirable considering the means of the province, it is far inferior to that of Braga. We were shewn a large hall hung with pictures of the patrons of the institution, and containing a tablet on which are painted in gold letters their names and amount of donations. Formerly a wretched house stood on the spot, incapable of containing twelve persons, when General Silveira, well known during the Peninsular war, commenced a larger building, and a Senhor Francisco Luis de Freitas gave the bulk of his fortune to construct the present handsome edifice and to endow the institution. A physician and a surgeon are in daily attendance. Again I say, when in every province of the empire there are such noble institutions, dependent entirely on the charity of private individuals for their support, there must be much good in the country.

Leaving the hospital, the polite stranger conducted us a short way further on to a new burial-ground, situated on the very brink of a lofty precipice above the Corgo. It is surrounded by massive stone-work, and a handsome iron railing above it, the gate being particularly elegant. On this spot, which commands a fine wild view of the torrent and the Marão on one side, and the city and surrounding hills on the other, Don Carlos of Spain, during his residence here, before he returned to deluge his country in blood, used to spend his days, from sunrise to sunset, repairing home only to take his meals, and returning again

as soon as they were concluded. It is truly a spot of wild grandeur, fit for the meditation of the mighty plans to win a crown and absolute power, which he so soon afterwards fruitlessly attempted to realize. Unhappy prince! had he fought for the cause of freedom and enlightenment, he might now have been monarch of Spain: he chose another course, and few can mourn his fate, however they may pity his lot.

Villa Real is a very picturesque city, but we had not time to inspect its beauties in detail, as the sun was now rapidly sinking, and we had three long leagues to perform.

Mounting our mules, our arrieiros driving our beast of burden before us, we descended into a wild deep valley across a narrow bridge without a parapet, it taking us an hour before we reached the summit of the other side; indeed, in the neighbourhood of few cities can a wilder or more picturesque glen be found. We had fortunately passed the worst part of the road before it became dark, when we lighted a torch, several of which we had brought, to guide us on our way. About five or six miles from Regoa the road improved, the Wine Company having carried it thus far; but no attention being paid to its repair, that likewise is falling into decay.

As we were winding along the side of the mountain we saw, at some distance before us, a collection of bright lights undulating at a slow pace over the ground. "There goes an *accompanhamento*, and we shall not be allowed to pass it," observed our arrieiros. "What?" I asked. "A funeral—an accompanying—

and they have a quarter of a league or more to go at least." Pleasant, I thought, to be thus made unwilling mourners! "It matters not," I observed; "I will explain that we are in haste, and no offence will be taken at our trotting by." When we overtook the funeral we found about thirty men and boys, of the lowest orders, waving burning torches in the air, the greater number quarrelling vehemently which way they should proceed, while, perfectly neglected, on the ground, lay an open coffin, containing the body of a young girl, dressed in tinselled robes and decked with flowers. She, the chief object of the procession, was unthought of, while the rest of the crowd were shouting, wrangling, and gesticulating; so that I could almost have fancied myself in Ireland among a drunken party returning from a wake. This, I must observe, was a scene very unusual in Portugal, and therefore to me the more remarkable.

After riding for an hour and a half by torch-light, we arrived at the inn at which I had before stopped in Regoa. It must be owned that it did not appear to so much advantage as it did before, on our return from the less civilized parts of the country.

I was much interested during the evening by the conversation of a most intelligent and respectable young farmer, who told me that by a proper system of draining and manuring, his land now produced more than double what it formerly had done, and that his neighbours were gradually following his example, though at first much opposed to his experiments. He was the first Portuguese farmer I ever spoke to whose

mind appeared free from prejudice, and ready to adopt every means to improve his country.

Early the next morning we crossed the river on our way to Lamego, first calling on an old friend who has a quinta near it. I recollect him a dignified friar of the order of St. Bernardo, and he was at that time a celebrated and very eloquent preacher. Being accused of liberal principles, he was persecuted by the Miguelite party, when he threw off his clerical habit; and, on the triumph of the charter, having become possessed of some property, he purchased a suppressed monastery, and the estate belonging to it, where he now resides as an independent lord, laughing at the thunders of the Church, and at imposture in all its forms. Though not another Rabelais, he has very much of his sarcastic wit and thorough hatred of despotism.

The road from the Douro to Lamego, and for a league beyond, was one of the best in Portugal; but it seems scarcely credible, that, leading from a city inhabited by so many wealthy and influential men, even that gives symptoms of decay, and no attempts are made to restore it or to macadamize it. Without ceremony I expressed my surprise and vexation to my friends. "It is not our fault," each one answered: "it is the business of the Camara, not ours."

"It is your fault!" I indignantly exclaimed. "You could repair it if you would. If the Camara will not, they will surely give you leave to expend a few pounds on removing a disgrace to your country."

"Alas! alas! we want patriotism," was the re-

joinder. "There is none of it in the country—we cannot afford to be patriots."

This is the language of one and all of the upper classes. It arises from want of confidence in each other—no one is willing to make a sacrifice himself, when he thinks his neighbours will not join him in the work. Now I believe that there are many patriotic men in the country, ready to offer up all they possess to benefit her, and that could they once be brought together, Portugal would soon assume a very different aspect to what she does at present.

Oh for that loadstone, the heart of a great man, to draw around him all the pure metal in the land from out the many forms which now encrust it, whether Carlistas, Septembristas, Absolutists, or Republicans!

Soon after quitting the house of our friend the ex-friar, we arrived at Lamego, and were politely welcomed by Senhor Antonio Teixeira de Souza, at whose handsome mansion I had before spent a day, and of which I have already given a description in a former Sketch.

Before dinner he accompanied us to visit the church of Nossa Senhora dos Remedios, built a short distance from the city on the summit of a hill. Of this unique edifice I made mention also on my previous visit. The view of Lamego, from the highest terrace, with its Moorish castle in the centre, and numerous ranges of wild rocky mountains beyond, and green valleys at their base, is very beautiful.

As the lady of the house was an invalid, we dined early, and it being Lent, the dinner was composed entirely of fish and eggs, dressed in twenty different

ways, with some very excellent soup made without meat. I begged our host would not apologize for the fare he gave us, assuring him that we had feasted rather than fasted; and indeed he himself seemed to consider the system of abstaining from meat on fixed days was little else than a farce.

In the evening a number of gentlemen came in, with whom I had much conversation. My chief theme was the roads, and I earnestly advised them, as I have taken the liberty of impressing on others, to exert all their means to get a common carriage-road cut along the banks of the Douro from Oporto into Spain. I feel assured that the work might easily be performed if the government would grant a slight toll on all wines brought down the river, and all goods and passengers who travel over it.

Should this road be formed, the Douro will be as much visited as the Rhine; and English tourists, satiated with other beaten parts of Europe, will flock in crowds to Portugal, scattering their wealth over the now impoverished land. It will become also the high road into Spain, and greatly facilitate the intercourse between the two countries. Of course it would prove the salvation of the Douro district, and therefore I earnestly exhorted the wealthy proprietors to employ their fortunes in forwarding the project. All applauded my observations on the subject, but no one to whom I spoke appeared to have sufficient energy to take the matter in hand. The next morning I called on my friend Senhor Macario de Castro, one of the most influential and highly-gifted fidalgos in the province.

He immediately entered into my views, offering his utmost assistance to whoever should undertake the enterprise, and earnestly recommended its adoption, at the same time pointing out the various difficulties in the way*.

The following morning we rode out with our friend to a beautiful quinta he possesses, about a league from Lamego. The pleasure-grounds alone are of considerable extent, and laid out with much taste, though even there the talent of an artist might be employed to some purpose. Directly in front of the house rises a rugged mound, down which the owner is about to

* Since I concluded these Sketches a project has been started to form a rail-road along the banks of the Douro to Salamanca in Spain, against which I have frequently expressed a strong and decided opinion. The difficulties in making a common road are great, and those in forming a rail-road are infinitely greater; as is the expense of the latter in no way to be compared to that of the former. Indeed, I consider one feasable, the other next to impossible, without the slightest probability of paying interest for the capital expended on it. It must be remembered that at present there are no common roads in the neighbourhood of the Douro—a rail-road is useful only to those proceeding some distance; and therefore the inhabitants of the banks of the river would still remain without roads, which they so much require, and capital, which ought to be employed in forming them, would be turned to a less useful purpose. The navigation of the Douro being open from Spain, there already exists a natural high road for the conveyance of *heavy* goods or produce *down* the stream by water, such as corn and wine, and none but light goods *go up*, such as manufactures, for which a common road is abundantly sufficient. If, however, my countrymen choose to hazard their money in the undertaking, of course the Portuguese will be much indebted to them; but they must not be surprised at its failure. From the previous pages my readers may form an idea of the style of country through which it is proposed to carry the line; and they must remember that the work was written before I was aware any one even dreamed of such a project.

conduct a waterfall, which, seen between the trees, will have an excessively pretty effect. Walks are led beneath the trees, turning round the hill exactly, in the English style, while below, a neat flower-garden with shady arbours in it surrounds a small lake abounding in fish. Indeed, I have seen few quintas in Portugal which can boast of greater attractions, and I doubt not that in a few years it will be still more beautiful. We returned home to an early dinner, and as I was anxious to be in Oporto on the following day, we were compelled to bid our friend farewell, and to proceed on our journey. He politely accompanied us some part of the way, when, turning to our left, we crossed the Douro at a spot considerably lower down than Regoa.

As we did not mount our mules till four o'clock, it became quite dark long before we reached the village of Mezão Frio, where we bought torches to light us up the mountain to Quintella. It was a lovely night, and our mules being sure-footed we much enjoyed our torch-light ride up the steep ascent, notwithstanding the execrable road over which we passed. A romantic scene presented itself as the glare of the torch lighted up the savage rocks, and threw a yet deeper shade into the glen on our right. At last a light from the hamlet appeared glittering like a star far above us, and by eight o'clock we reached the hospitable mansion of Quintella.

We were on foot long before daybreak, and having breakfasted, were about to start just as the grey dawn was appearing, when one of the arrieiros whom we had

ordered to proceed on with the baggage, rushed in, with consternation in his face, to say that the baggage-mule, whose head he had left for a moment at the door, had disappeared. This was indeed provoking, as I fully expected the beast would have fallen with all our property over some precipice; in addition to which, a favourite dog who had accompanied us, having hurt its foot, was placed in a basket on the animal's back. It was just possible also that some robber passing might have been tempted to drive off the mule, when there would have been little chance of our ever recovering our property. We however dispatched our arrieiros down the mountain, and were yet mourning my poor Alp's hard fate, when the crack of a whip sounded in our ears, and soon the mule appeared looming through the darkness, closely followed by the driver punishing him for his frolic. He had, it appeared, found the door of a stable open, and, fortunately for us, walked into it, and thus cut short his ramble.

We now trotted and slid as fast as we could towards Oporto, performing five leagues by nine o'clock, when we reached Villa Meão. We there found fresh steeds waiting for us; and who can describe the satisfaction of mounting a horse after being bumped for so many days on a mule!

By three o'clock we reached Oporto, with our horses quite fresh, the worst part of the road being that crossing the Valongo hills, which is soon to be improved.

I have now given a Sketch of the greatest part of the north of Portugal. Bragança and Chavez I have never visited, nor do I believe that there is much to interest the traveller in those towns, or in the scenery in the neighbourhood. I do not, however, pretend to have described one half of the beauties of this part of Portugal—of the Minho especially, so rich in lovely views and interesting antiquities. A description of the province of the Minho alone would, from all I have heard, be sufficient to fill a most entertaining volume; but I have attempted generally to describe men and events, rather than things, of which few people take pleasure in reading.

On another visit to the country I may perhaps make more extended tours, and give of it a more elaborate description. For the present I offer, for the amusement of my countrymen, the preceding rough Sketches of Lusitania.

The Wine Boat.

THE END.

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